

I used to thank God that I had two arms and two legs. Now I'm grateful that I've got one of each'

BLOWN APART IN A MINEFIELD:
CHRIS MOON'S COMPELLING STORY, p16,17

Dunwoody does it!
Jumping into history
Page 23

30p
EVERY WEEKDAY

Minister's forceful intervention helps Kosovans to reach British haven

Short takes on border guards over refugees

FROM DANIEL MCGRORY AT BRAZDE REFUGEE CAMP

MOBBED by bewildered refugees, Clare Short confronted Macedonian officials yesterday and urged them to stop obstructing families escaping from Kosovo.

The International Development Secretary demanded that 11 busloads of refugees, who had spent 12 hours stranded on a roadside near the frontier, be allowed into a relief camp built by British soldiers and then helped the frightened and frail to leave the first bus. Two had died while stranded the previous night.

"We have to quickly move the thousands trapped in those horrific conditions on the border before more die," she said.

Macedonian officials showed little inclination to open their border, despite condemnation by aid organisations and the attempts of the short-tempered British minister. She was inspecting the still-empty refugee camp at Brazde when two Macedonian ministers arrived by chance and blamed Nato for the delay in filling the 200 tents.

Ms Short forcibly disputed that claim and persuaded Aleksander Dimitrov, the Foreign Minister, to contact his Prime Minister by mobile telephone to order the first refugees into the camp, built on a private airfield.

Even then a zealous policeman in sunglasses tried to turn the buses away. The faces pressed against the window despaired at the prospect of being moved again.

British troops looked on with obvious frustration, unable to intervene. Then Ms Short and her entourage — including Brigadier Tim Cross, who is running Nato's emergency relief operation — appeared.

Together they led weary families to the lines of green tents and to troops waiting to hand out food and water. For some it was their first meal in 48 hours.

Ms Short's actions on the ground contrasted with a sense of confusion in London over how many refugees might come to Britain. Downing Street and Jack Straw, the Home Secretary, said on Sunday that "some thousands" would be welcomed, but Tony Blair gave a warning yesterday against any premature action that would send the wrong message to President Milosevic.

The Prime Minister said that, although he was still committed to accepting several thousand refugees if necessary, the "ultimate objective" was to repatriate them to Kosovo.



The best place for them to be cared for was in Macedonia and Albania. "I emphasise again — and it's very important, or else Milosevic gets the wrong message here — these people need to go back to Kosovo where they live, where they want to be, and we will make sure that happens."

Ms Short told BBC Radio 4's Today programme yesterday: "All this talk of getting people out of the region is, in my view, irrelevant."

"I'm here in Macedonia and there are thousands and thousands of people on the other side of the border, not being fed, babies being born, people becoming sick. And if every one is in a tizz in London talking about getting people out, it's irrelevant to the crisis we have here."

When told that Mr Straw had announced that Britain would now accept thousands of refugees, she said: "I don't think this is helpful."

Officials said that the Government's position was not inconsistent. However, it is clear that Nato's announcement on Sunday of the numbers that some European countries would be prepared to take caught ministers off guard.

A spokeswoman for the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees said that, whatever protestations were made of any refugee evacuations being temporary, some would inevitably settle in Britain and other Nato countries. Lyndall Sachs said: "Some of the refugees just won't be able to go home. It will be impossible. You can't make people go home if they do not have a home to go to."

At Brazde yesterday, when asked how many refugees Britain would take, Ms Short replied: "Don't know, don't care. That's up to London to decide. Let's get people out of that squalor."

The Nato soldiers at the camp were caught by surprise when the refugees turned up, instead of going, as they should have done, to another camp two miles away. Ms Short told them to forget the rules and just "dig in and help".

British troops agreed to fence off the camp last night, as the Macedonian authorities insisted, but are refusing to guard the compound to stop refugees escaping. Riot police immediately appeared at the gates, though too late to stop some who begged for lifts on the roadside to reach relatives in the capital, Skopje.

Mr Dimitrov was unrepentant at his country's behaviour towards the refugees. "Tell me any country that would just throw open its borders if 200,000 people showed up," he said.



Clare Short leading Kosovan refugees into the relief camp built by British troops at Brazde

BALKANS WAR DAY 13

■ Mahia Ismaila was on the run from the Serbs for three days when she gave birth to her seventh child on a pile of old clothes in a snow-filled forest. There were no blankets, no water, no medicine. There was an audience of 200.
Janine di Giovanni reports on page 3

■ Not satisfied with using young men as human shields against Nato attacks, nor with the summary execution of children or the burning of homes, Serbian border guards have added another atrocity to their comrades' crimes: rape.
Sam Kiley reports from Albania on page 2

■ A political rift in Belgrade has led to confusion over the number of casualties caused by the Nato bombings. While the media want to fan the flames of patriotism, headline political leaders want to keep the outside world in the dark.
Eve-Anne Prentice reports on page 5

■ Clear weather over Kosovo led to an intensification of Nato airstrikes yesterday, but also a sharp increase in the number of Yugoslav anti-aircraft attacks. But while Nato is ready to take a more aggressive approach to bombing Yugoslav forces in the province, they are having difficulty finding them.
Michael Evans reports on pages 6 and 8

■ Madeleine Albright fled Nazism as a child, then Stalinism. It is little wonder that she is making a personal crusade of ending ethnic cleansing in the former Yugoslavia.
Ben Macintyre reports on page 9

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Disease stalks the muddy riverbank

Each night, the numbers of the dead and dying increase, reports Daniel McGrory

RED CROSS teams are concerned that epidemics are taking hold among the 40,000 refugees stranded on a riverbank beyond the reach of doctors.

Macedonian border police are refusing medical staff permission to go to the sick, so the victims have to be dragged up a muddy embankment at the Blace crossing point, where one tent is serving as a field hospital.

Stephen Tomlin, vice president of the international medical group, said that in recent days cases of hepatitis, pneumonia and tuberculosis had been discovered in the camp. "When you have a large number of people

and sanitation is poor, there is a risk of diarrhoea and dysentery. With children it is measles. We must get sanitation to these people before disease takes a grip."

Aid workers are also afraid that as the temperatures rise after a week of freezing rain, cholera may break out. A Red Cross spokesman said: "Every day makes the likelihood of epidemics more likely. That is why these people need to be moved fast and clean

water and sanitation brought in immediately." Nato medics, with their army field hospitals, are not allowed near the border to help.

With no sanitation, no shelter and no running water, the numbers of dead and dying increase daily. Most of the 30 refugees who have died in the past 72 hours were elderly people suffering from exhaustion and dehydration. "After what they have been through, their bodies could take no

more," the spokesman said. Other victims have been women going into labour. Two died in childbirth last night, as did their babies.

The medical care the Red Cross can provide at its tent is rudimentary. One doctor said: "We can't perform emergency surgery and for serious illness we have to rely on the Macedonians to take them to hospital in Skopje, 20 kilometres away."

"Those with conditions like asthma cannot get the medical help they need, so things that are treatable become acute and can be fatal."

Dr Stuttaford, page 2

Couple saved from sea after helicopter crash

By CHRISTINE MIDDAP

A PREGNANT woman and her art dealer husband survived nearly two hours in icy waters after their helicopter packed with works of art crashed off Dorset yesterday. The coastguard said that Paul and Lisa Burgess, from Knotty Green, Buckinghamshire, were about half an hour from death when they were found, surrounded by their wrecked paintings.

Mrs Burgess, 27, "was so traumatised that her hands had to be prised free from the grabrail of the helicopter," a rescuer said.

The alarm was raised just before midnight when Mr Burgess, 37, who is also believed to work for a computer software firm, radioed: "We are lost in dense fog and all I can see is cliffs." Seconds later the Bell Jet Ranger crashed into the sea about two miles from Lyme Bay.

They were picked up by a fishing boat, and transferred



Paul Burgess is helped ashore by lifeboatman David Street

to the Lyme Regis inshore lifeboat. But when they reached the shore, they refused to get into another helicopter to be flown to hospital, preferring to go by road.

Neither was seriously injured — Mr Burgess broke his left arm and Mrs Burgess had cuts and bruises to her face — and they were discharged last night.

Photographs, page 12

Sanctions against Libya are lifted

By JAMES BONE AND PHILIP WEBSTER

LIBYA faces a compensation bill of hundreds of millions of pounds if the two men handed over yesterday to face trial for the Lockerbie disaster are convicted.

The surrender of Abdel Baset Ali Mohamed al-Megrahi and al-Amin Khalifa Fhimah led to the immediate suspension of the UN sanctions against Libya which have been in force since 1992.

The UN will review the sanctions issue in three months, by which time the Security Council should have received a report from Kofi Annan, the UN Secretary-General, on whether Libya has renounced terrorism and agreed to pay compensation. Although insurance claims have been met, no formal compensation has been paid to the families of the 270 people who died in the 1988 Pan Am bombing over Scotland.

UN officials said that Libya had made clear in private negotiations that it was ready

to compensate relatives if the two suspects were convicted by the Scottish court convened in The Netherlands. However, a clear commitment is needed from Tripoli to pay whatever level of damages is assessed.

Mr Annan said he was confident that the two suspects would receive a fair trial before the transplanted Scottish court.

He said the transfer of the suspects to The Netherlands had gone smoothly and that the Security Council had acted immediately to suspend the sanctions on arms sales, air travel, imports of oil technology and diplomatic representation.

The decision means that Libyans will once again be able to fly freely into the country without having to travel overland from Egypt or Tunisia, and can acquire spare parts for its oil industry.

Suspects arrive, page 10

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BALKANS WAR: TERROR TACTICS

Serbs make rape a weapon of war

Groups of silent women speak volumes, writes

Sam Kiley
from Kukes

NOT satisfied with using young men as human shields against Nato and Kosovo Liberation Army attacks, nor with summary execution of children and the burning of homes to accelerate the exodus of Kosovo Albanians, Serbian border guards have taken to adding one more atrocity — rape.

Their victims are reluctant to talk about what happens in the border post at Monice, through which more than 200,000 people have been herded over the last few weeks. But the faraway stares in their tearful eyes, their torn clothing and the despair of the families of the victims speak volumes.

Just as the extremists of Bosnia's Serb Republic pursued a campaign against Muslims which included the forced impregnation of many Bosnian women, so the border guards of Monice clearly hope to father scores of Muslim children carrying Serb blood.

According to human rights groups and investigators from the War Crimes Tribunal at The Hague, and the victims themselves, Kosovo Albanian women are being picked out at the border as they wait with their families to cross into Albania, taken to a building not far away and violated.

"There have been so many credible reports of this sort of thing that we are convinced it is part of a systematic campaign of sexual abuse. The whole level of atrocities being committed in Kosovo has overwhelmed us. We are going to have to bring in extra investigators," said a member of the tribunal team in Kukes, the nearest town to the border crossing.

The Serbs' method is simple. They select the women they fancy tormenting as they approach the final crossing point with their families, who are ordered to keep travelling into Albania.

They are then taken away, weeping and begging for their



A Macedonian soldier stands guard yesterday before several thousand refugees in a hastily-erected reception centre at the border crossing point of Blace. The women keep silent about the campaign of rape

lives. Hours, perhaps a day passes for the families, and then those who survive the ordeal are sent on their way with a casual wave.

At Monice their families keep a vigil standing in silent huddles by the metal barrier. Reluctant to admit what is happening to their daughters, these members of a society who view rape as the ultimate shame for a woman, say: "We were separated, and praying that the Serbs will let them live."

"When the young women are reunited, there is no celebration that they have survived. They fall in silence into their parents' arms. Hiding their

faces they rejoin the huge throng of miserable humanity — again in silence.

Overwhelmed by the logistics of coping with an influx of refugees which is expected to reach 250,000 in the next day or so, and climb to half a million or more, the Albanian authorities and the few aid agencies which have reacted to the Kosovo catastrophe have been unable to offer any kind of help to the rape victims.

"There is simply nothing we can do but hope that the families of the victims are strong enough and supportive enough of these young women. But if any are pregnant as a result, they face a miserable

future of possible rejection by their families, or of raising a child conceived in hatred. That must be the worst thing anyone can inflict upon a woman," said a British aid worker.

'We are convinced it is a systematic campaign of sexual abuse'

in Kukes. There have been reports of rape and the use of Kosovo Albanian women as sex slaves since the beginning of the forced exodus which came close on the heels of the start of Nato's air bombardments of

Yugoslavia. But the latest revelations appear to carry more weight with human rights groups who stand alongside the families of abducted women and teenage girls, helpless

to do anything about what they are certain is going on behind the bulletproof glass of the Monice crossing.

Young men have been spared rape, but their life expectancy behind Serb lines

can be calculated in minutes. Hague investigators are looking into a number of credible reports that up to 500 men were marched into a field close to where the KLA has been fighting a rearguard action against the Serbs on the Albanian border.

Once in the field their resistance was allegedly broken down by being forced to stand in freezing rain for several hours. They were then driven like cattle back into a barn and ordered to dress in rags provided for them.

Then, at gunpoint, they were ordered to stand in front of Serb trenches while the Serb artillery fired mortars

and heavier weapons at KLA positions, confident that they would not be the first victims if fire was returned.

So far, The Hague said, there had been only a handful of survivors from this latest alleged atrocity.

In Kukes, the refugees said that they were now pinning their hopes on Nato and the dim expectation of ground forces to save those still left in Kosovo.

Risolta Unico, a student from Dajkovica who crossed into Albania in her slippers, had been spared the rapists because at Qafae Prushit the border is manned by professional Yugoslav soldiers who main-

tain a keen-eyed watch on their Albanian counterparts.

"They are burning our houses and killing the men. In the town there have been many rapes, but no one will speak of it. We need to be saved before there is nothing left for Nato to worry about. Please tell the world that we are worth it, we are human beings not animals to be slaughtered," she cried.

When told that the US had ordered 24 Apache attack helicopters to Albania she broke into a broad smile. "First there will be soldiers, then there will be soldiers. Nato will not let us down. If they do not send troops, then what was the point of the bombing?"

Terror, just like cold and hunger, can weaken the body's defences



MEDICAL BRIEFING

THE refugees from Kosovo, crowded together in wet, cold and insanitary circumstances so dire that when the Macedonian troops visit them they are issued with gas masks, will suffer diseases spread by poor sanitation and contaminated water.

The authorities will be expecting gastroenteritis from Salmonella, Shigella, pathogenic E.coli and giardiasis and Hepatitis A. Other infections spread by droplet infection, coughs and sneezes, which would in healthier situations cause no more than a cough or cold, will when caught by someone whose immune system has been undermined by fear, terror, cold and starvation, result in pneumonia.

Many people harbour opportunistic organisms which remain quiescent in any, or many, of the body's systems but will if the patient's resistance to infection is lowered, cause serious troubles with pneumonia, the gastro-intestinal,

urinary tract or skin. As well as this ever-present threat of death and disease from opportunistic infections, there are now, apparently, three main causes of anxiety. There is an outbreak of Hepatitis A, bacterial pneumonia is rampant and there is an epidemic of measles.

Ex-servicemen who fought on the other side of the Adriatic in Italy in the 1939-45 war will not be surprised by reports of Hepatitis A. It was a constant scourge throughout the Italian campaign, despite the British Army's keen attention to latrine digging. It is doubtful if refugees could be similarly disciplined.

The virus causing Hepatitis A is spread by faeces, or very

occasionally, contact with contaminated blood. The disease has a two to six-week incubation period and so it is unlikely that the present cases have been caught after the refugees reached Albania or Macedonia. They must have been infected en route. The initial symptoms are similar to flu, but are associated with an almost total loss of appetite, nausea, vomiting and a severe headache and a feeling of absolute wretchedness. After three to 10 days, the patient usually starts to feel better but then begins to become, in many cases, jaundiced. The majority of patients with Hepatitis A, however, will make a full recovery. The outcome in bacterial

pneumonia depends on the age and resistance of the patient — older people and young children are especially vulnerable — the bacteria involved and the availability of appropriate antibiotics.

Measles epidemics are always likely when large numbers of unvaccinated children are mixed together. The seriousness of the illness is partly dependent on the quality of the diet in the weeks before the virus was caught. In this epidemic, the immune response of the children will have also been reduced by the disruption of their normal lifestyle, the cold and the fear. Medical care is essential for those who are badly affected with measles, without it the inevitable, but usually small, mortality and morbidity associated with the infection will become unacceptably high.

DR THOMAS
STUTTAFORD

Refugees forced into Serbia after Nato blocks escape route

FROM REUTERS IN ROZAJE, MONTENEGRO

REFUGEES fleeing to Montenegro from Mitrovica, Kosovo's third largest city, have been forced into Serbia after Nato bombers destroyed a key road bridge in Kosovo, officials said yesterday.

Muslims and ethnic Albanians from Mitrovica, about 15 miles north-west of Pristina, began to arrive at Montenegro's eastern border late last week and the flow increased at the weekend.

But the numbers were reduced to a trickle yesterday after Nato bombers had destroyed the bridge, Kosovo, blocking their escape route.

A spokeswoman for the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees said she believed that they had been diverted to the Serb town of Novi Pazar, about 15 miles further northwest. From there, she expected them to travel south into

Montenegro, which forms part of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. It has distanced itself from Yugoslav President Milosevic and has opened its borders to the refugees.

About 35,700 people fleeing Kosovo have sought shelter in Montenegro over the past nine days, although some have moved on to Albania.

Mitrovica is a large industrial town with mineral reserves.

Several hundred refugees from the city crossed the Montenegrin frontier on Saturday and about 2,300 on Sunday, the UNHCR said.

Some of the refugees who reached Rozaje at the weekend said that Serb forces had evicted them from their homes, then taken them by bus to the border.

In Podgorica, the Montenegrin capital, an anti-Nato



An ethnic Albanian from Kosovo carries his father across the border to the Albanian village of Moriza

rock concert was staged for the second day running. It drew several thousand spectators, and another concert is scheduled for today.

France will not accept large numbers of Kosovans, arguing that they should be sent home, Hubert Vedrine, the Foreign Minister, said.

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BALKANS WAR: FATE OF THE EXILES

Record of mass migrations offers scant prospect of return

REFUGEES rarely go back. In all the waves of ethnic cleansing, forced deportations and mass migrations of the past century, very few displaced groups have been able to reclaim their homeland.

From the camps of Nazi slave labourers to the Palestinian camps in the Middle East, from Vietnam to Rwanda, Bosnia to Kurdistan, those who are forced into exile often find the doors barred even when it is safe to return. The prospects for all the Kosovo refugees to go back to their villages do not look good: the facts on the ground change too quickly.

The wave of human misery that accompanies every war always flows to the nearest shelter. But often this proves inadequate, inhos-



Gaza and the Palestinians offer a grim reminder of the instability that can emerge in camps near a refugee homeland, writes Michael Binyon

pitiable or insecure. There is always the fear that the enemy is still too near, or that the new host country will find the refugees a burden and push them home again. Many who flee believe that they will go home within weeks. But as months stretch into years, they begin to look further afield.

This is the nub of the argument over the Kosovans. Can they remain on the borders of their

former homeland in huge numbers without destabilising their host countries? Will they be safe? Will they lose their neighbours, family connections and chance of return if they are moved away?

The dilemma has been at the heart of the Palestinian tragedy. Driven out in 1948, most wanted to stay in temporary camps, neither they, nor the surrounding Arab countries would accept resettle-

ment elsewhere. But as dreams of a return became ever more distant, the camps became a breeding ground for frustration and terrorism. The result is Gaza — an option that appeals to no one.

Most countries accept that population transfers cannot be reversed. The forced movement of all Greeks from Turkey and Turks from Greece took place amid fighting in 1922, and apart from ancestral memories there is no claim that Greeks will regain their old homes in Smyrna — modern Izmir. The partition of India at independence led to one of the world's bloodiest population transfers, which is also irrevocable. Even in Cyprus, current peace plans are based on the premise that refugees on each side

will receive compensation rather than their old homes back.

Those who are forcibly evicted do sometimes return. Stalin deported the Crimean Tatars en masse during the Second World War. It took a generation before any were allowed back, but not all found a warm welcome returning to what was now the Ukraine.

Those who flee persecution sometimes go home when things calm down. Greek Communists who fled in their thousands on defeat in the civil war spent 30 unhappy years in the Soviet Union before the Greek Government allowed them back. Some of the thousands of Hungarians who fled in 1956 went back on the fall of Communism — but most had made a new

life in Britain, Canada and elsewhere.

It is harder to go back if the circumstances prompting the flight remain unchanged. This is especially true of economic migrants. The Vietnamese boatpeople were looking for a better life. They had no wish to return, even from detention camps in Hong Kong, and had to be forced to board flights back. Cubans who fled President Castro also claimed they were fleeing Communism; but if he died tomorrow, the Cuban population in Miami would still remain sizeable.

The only time an exodus has been reversed is when a haven has been set up to take them. Most Rwandan Tutsis went back after the genocidal Government was

overthrown — though their Hutu killers remained in neighbouring Zaire. The Iraqi Kurds who fled in the wake of the failed uprising against President Saddam Hussein after the Gulf War arrived in Turkey and did not leave until the United Nations set up a "safe haven" in the Kurdish no-fly zone. But many left again, when inter-ethnic fighting broke out. Hundreds of thousands of Bosnians left during the Bosnian War. Thousands have returned but most want to stay in the European Union, and it has taken forcible evictions by the German authorities in particular to push them home in any numbers. The same will happen, aid agencies fear, if the Kosovans are airlifted to the West.

British prepare to offer sanctuary

DISUSED military camps, hospitals and care homes are being earmarked for the thousands of ethnic Albanians who may be offered temporary sanctuary in Britain. Aid workers, who say airlifting them from the Balkans should be a last resort, are keen to avoid isolating them further from their communities by dispersing them too thinly around the country.

The Home Office said yesterday that it was still finalising a list of suitable properties where refugees could be adequately cared for. A spokesman added: "We are looking at empty military establishments, hospitals and local authority hostels and homes. The details have yet to be finalised because we are still talking to various government departments as well as local authorities."

Kent County Council said that it was examining the possibility of housing up to 400 refugees in a variety of accommodation, including a disused hospital in Dartford. Sandy Bruce-Lockhart, the council's leader, said that the Government should clarify how long the refugees would be staying. He said: "We are concerned that the refugees will be traumatised and will want to know how long they can stay or

Disused hospital and army bases may be homes for refugees, report Joanna Bale and Tim Hames

when they can go home. The Government is saying that it will be a temporary measure until they can return to Kosovo, but it would be helpful to know what that means. Surely they cannot return until an independent state has been established and supported by Nato. We are hoping for some clarification."

Disused army bases such as Rolleston near Shrewton, Wiltshire, which has housed prisoners and refugees in the past, are thought to be among those being considered by the Home Office. Peter Chalke, leader of Wiltshire County Council, said: "Rolleston is probably a likely contender, along with a couple of others used for army summer exercises such as Knook, near Warmminster, and Westdown, near Shrewton. We have a responsibility to do something to help and we will be looking at whatever other accommodation there is available."

Other possible sites include a former RAF nuclear bomber base at Fimble, near Doncaster, and Middleton Towers,

a former Pontins holiday camp at Heysham, Lancashire. A spokeswoman for the Refugee Council said that, in the event of mass airlifts of refugees to Britain, it hoped that families and communities were kept together to avoid isolating people. She explained: "We don't yet know if they will be coming in large numbers, but it is important to keep family groups together. When the Government offered accommodation to Bosnians in 1992 they were kept together in groups, which is the model we would be looking at."

Jack Straw will attend a meeting of European Union interior ministers tomorrow to discuss how refugees might be airlifted out of the region, an operation fraught with logistical problems.

The Serb owner of a village shop and post office has closed the premises in protest at the Nato bombing. Villagers in Ilfley, near Oxford, have been surprised by a sign pinned up by Nada Bibic, saying: "I don't serve today or any day to come until bombing on Serbia stops."

I am sorry for all my good customers here in village. But you have to understand that my country is occupied. My parents and relatives suffer and all my people in Serbia. Just know that Kosovo is just the excuse to invade our country. Nato and all other countries who join them will not succeed because the Serbs will fight until the last."

David Penwarden, vice-chairman of Friends of Ilfley, the residents' association, said: "The bombing of Serbia was the last straw for Mrs Bibic, who has struggled to keep the shop open. Her parents have had to leave their home in Belgrade and she is very upset. One or two people in the village have objected, but I have told them to grin and bear it."

Mrs Bibic was unavailable for comment yesterday, but her shop window, cluttered with newspaper clippings and home-made posters, was a silent testament to her feelings. One poster declared "Nato = Hitler". The collage was punctuated by a note from the Post Office announcing that their substation was closed due to unforeseen circumstances. The handwritten sign said: "Post Office Closures Ltd are not associated with this protest against Nato."



A helper collects blankets for Kosovo in the village of Bressingham, in Norfolk. Meanwhile, the Home Office is studying lists of temporary accommodation

Seconds to make choice of new life in exile

By ADRIAN LEE

KELIMA BAUTOVIC was in a tent at a refugee centre, sheltering from a storm, when she was forced to decide her family's future in a few seconds. "Do you want to go to England tomorrow morning?" she was asked.

Homeless and eight months pregnant, she became one of 5,000 Bosnians who were involved in the last great influx of refugees to Britain, in the autumn of 1992. "It was not a difficult choice," she said yesterday. "When you have lost everything you don't refuse an offer of safety."

An arduous coach journey followed, before she and her daughter Ena, then six, arrived in Luton, Bedfordshire, with a group of about 100 other Bosnians. They were barely able to speak a word of English and lived at first in a church hall. Ten days later, Mrs Bautovic gave birth to her second daughter, Amina, as she waited for news of her husband, Enver, who was being held in a Serbian camp.

"We were happy to be in England — the people in Luton gave us as much as they could — but it was difficult. The biggest problem was the language barrier."

Following the release of her husband, the family was reunited. A son, Sead, was born two years ago, and although the Bautovics are still waiting to be granted full refugee status, husband and wife have jobs and a house. Their children attend both English and Bosnian schools.

Despite their settled life in England, where Mr Bautovic is a lorry driver, the couple would like to return to their home in northwest Bosnia.

According to the Government, many of the 5,000 Bosnians who arrived in 1992 received full asylum two years ago. More than 50 British towns and cities gave homes to Bosnians — large communities exist in London, Manchester, Birmingham and Cambridge. Jack Straw, the Home Secretary, said yesterday that his own constituency, Blackburn, had given sanctuary to "quite a number" of refugees.

Only a handful remain. Musa Haldar, an aid worker who helped arrange houses for 13 Bosnian families in Blackburn, seven years ago, said: "Some stayed for a year, then either went home or moved to other parts of the country. They were a small group and they found it quite difficult to settle here."

One Bosnian mother, who asked not to be named, said yesterday that she found life in Blackburn lonely and hoped to move to London. "I am happy here but there are no jobs and I feel isolated. I don't have any contact with other people from Bosnia." A refugee from eastern Bosnia, she was given the choice of England or Germany.

"I had read about England and wanted to learn the language," she said. "The people here are civilised. I am free to do what I like — if I want to wear a miniskirt or a long skirt it is up to me. I don't want to return to Bosnia — my home is occupied and I believe I would be killed."

Belgrade listens again for German bombers

AS THEY prepared for another sleepless night in Belgrade yesterday, the city's more senior residents shed quiet tears as they cast their minds back 58 years and a tragedy heralded by the Luftwaffe's bombers.

Olga Petrovic, 74, remembered her old house in the southern suburb of Zvezdara. She was lulled to sleep by a beautiful Balkan spring evening, of the sort that warmed the city last night.

"I was woken by a terrible noise and ran out on to the balcony. The sky was coloured black by a cloud of iron birds. I saw people running in the street, and then I tried to find my mother and my father. He was sleeping, and she was in the market," the old lady recalled. "That previous evening was the last time I saw my mother alive."

Today is the anniversary of the Luftwaffe's first attack on Belgrade, and the fact that German planes are again involved in bombing raids on Yugoslavia is not lost on the generation that lived through that first raid by Hitler.

What embitters and confuses them this time round is the role played by former allies such as Britain and France. America, too, they are disappointed in, but then pensioners like Olga remember the clumsy liberation raids of American bombers in 1944 that killed almost as many Belgraders as the Germans did on that morning in 1941.

"We ran towards a neighbour's house and then I heard a heavy explosion," Olga continued. "I turned round to see that it was our house. Our neighbour's house was also badly damaged, and everything was in flames. The explosions were all around us and the bombing seemed to last an eternity. When everything had passed we went out, and I couldn't recognise my birthplace. People were trying to find one another in ruins. They were screaming and calling for help. I saw a woman dying in the street and blood everywhere around her. There was blood everywhere and I dreamed that scene for a long time afterwards."

Experiencing the third bombing raids of her life no



Tom Walker reports from the city whose elderly residents remember the Luftwaffe's first attack 58 years ago today

longer worried her, she said: if she had to die in her flat, she would.

Almost 3,000 Belgraders died alongside Olga's mother on April 6, with thousands more wounded. Some 40 per cent of the city's buildings were destroyed, among them the national library containing treasures such as the Prizren Gospel and other medieval manuscripts, many of them from monasteries in Kosovo.

Out at the Yugoslav Aeronautical Museum at Belgrade's Surcin airport, Cedomir Janjic was more worried by the prospect of more Nato missiles. Several buildings already have been destroyed, and the museum director fears that his priceless collection of aircraft, a powerful testimony to Yugoslavia's bonds with the wartime allies, could be blown to pieces by a misplaced Tomahawk.

Yesterday Mr Janjic was attempting to move his collection — from a rickety biplane of 1909 through Hurricanes and Spitfires to MiG jet fighters — towards the centre of the space-age spherical museum building, in an attempt to limit any blast damage from the acres of glass windows all around.

He was only six years old in 1941, but has become one of the most learned sources on the German raids. He explained how the Luftwaffe arrived at about 7.30am. Germany having declared war with the Yugoslav Government after its planes had already taken off from bases in Hungary and Romania. They were joined later in the day by squadrons from Bulgaria: in all the Germans had 485 bombers and 160 fighters.

Against them the Yugoslavs mustered just 60 fighters, many of which were destroyed on the ground. One of the early heroes of the air force, 102nd

Squadron Commander Milos Zanic, was shot down just after taking off from an airfield that now lies under the concrete apartment blocks of New Belgrade. He was the first Yugoslav pilot to die that day; another ten were to follow later, and a total of 137 were downed during the war.

"We managed to shoot down 40 German planes with our artillery," said Mr Janjic, who today will lay a wreath at a memorial for the pilots lost. "Then other German planes that were partly damaged limped home to airstrips in Sarajevo and Zagreb and elsewhere — just like the Nato planes of today."

As he passed a Spitfire and a rare variant of the Hurricane, Mr Janjic paused, and made us listen. It was still early in the afternoon, but the sound of Nato aircraft could be heard high overhead. "Do the British understand the irony of all this?" he asked. "You are destroying your own history, too."

Mr Janjic found some fading photographs, one with German pilots gathered around a bomb with "Happy Easter" painted on it. Similar tactics are being employed today, with one missile that recently landed in central Serbia bearing the inscription: "From Albanians, to Serbia. It's payback time!"

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BALKANS WAR: THE AIR CAMPAIGN

Hidden forces frustrate RAF as low cloud lifts

CLEAR weather over Kosovo led to an intensification of Nato airstrikes yesterday, but also a sharp increase in the number of Yugoslav surface-to-air missile and anti-aircraft attacks. No alliance aircraft were reported hit.

The improving weather provided the first chance to search for Yugoslav army units in Kosovo. However, as the gloom lifted at Nato headquarters, many of the bomber pilots, including the increasingly frustrated RAF Harrier GR7 crews, returned with their Paveway bombs still attached to the wings.

They and other Nato aircraft had failed to find Yugoslav units operating out in the open. Knowing that the clear skies over Kosovo would encourage Nato to come looking for them, most of the troops involved in "ethnic cleansing" had hidden in deserted buildings, woods and camouflaged positions.

Nato said the air sorties had helped to stem the ethnic cleansing, although a video was released showing Yugoslav armoured units clearing all the inhabitants from the village of Glodane "with customary brutality".

RAF Tornado GR1s were used for the first time, flying on an operation from RAF Bruggen in Germany to Kosovo and back, a sortie that lasted seven hours. General Sir Charles Guthrie, the Chief of the Defence Staff, said six Tornados, with three VC10 air refuelling tankers, attacked a

Michael Evans and Tom Walker report on Nato's latest raids, including one on the Yugoslav air defence HQ

number of bridges and tunnels. Initial reports, he said, indicated that "our objectives were all achieved".

Air Commodore David Wilby, Nato military spokesman in Brussels, said: "The weather has only just cleared to give us a little more chance of hitting them hard and we are now getting our tactics right, making sure we have got all our forces in there. We have ramped up the number of sorties we are doing and we are taking the fight to them very hard."

Among the biggest targets hit in the previous 24 hours was a Yugoslav air defence headquarters in Belgrade and two army barracks in the town

of Vranje to the south. Yugoslav state television, RTS, showed images of damaged buildings close to the barracks, including houses, a cigarette factory and a bus station. It claimed that 11 Nato missiles had been fired on the targets in Vranje.

Following the announcement from Washington that it was sending 24 Apache attack helicopters to Albania — a move formally approved by Nato ambassadors yesterday — William Cohen, the US Defence Secretary, denied that it would lead to the future deployment of ground troops to Kosovo.

He told CNN it merely represented an intensification

and expansion of the air campaign. "It has been an air campaign from the beginning. It's going to be a continuation of the air campaign," he said, adding that the airstrikes would last for weeks.

Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, told a press conference at the Ministry of Defence: "After all the atrocities of the past two weeks, no decent person can now deny that Nato is right to fight the evil of President Milosevic."

He added: "The victims herded in their thousands in the past few days on to overcrowded trains are not people fleeing from the regime, but people being forcibly evicted by that regime. What we are

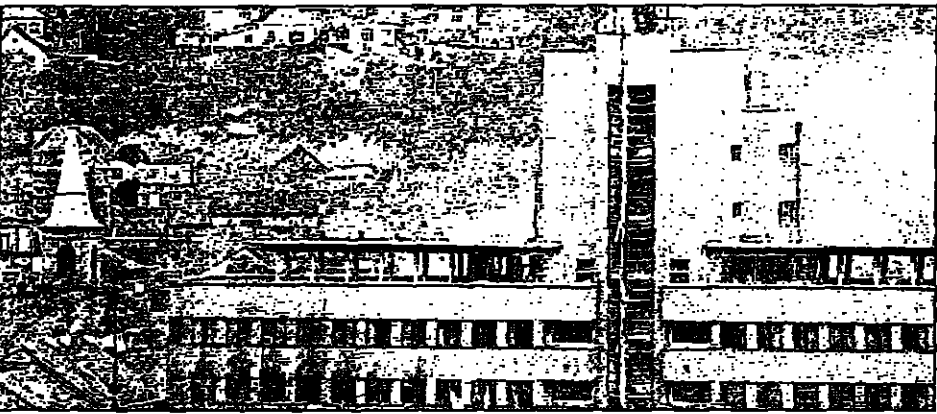
witnessing is mass deportation on a scale Europe has not seen since the days of Stalin and Hitler."

Mr Cook said that the airstrikes would continue against the Yugoslav forces "until Kosovo Albanian refugees were allowed to return to their homes under the protection of an international force".

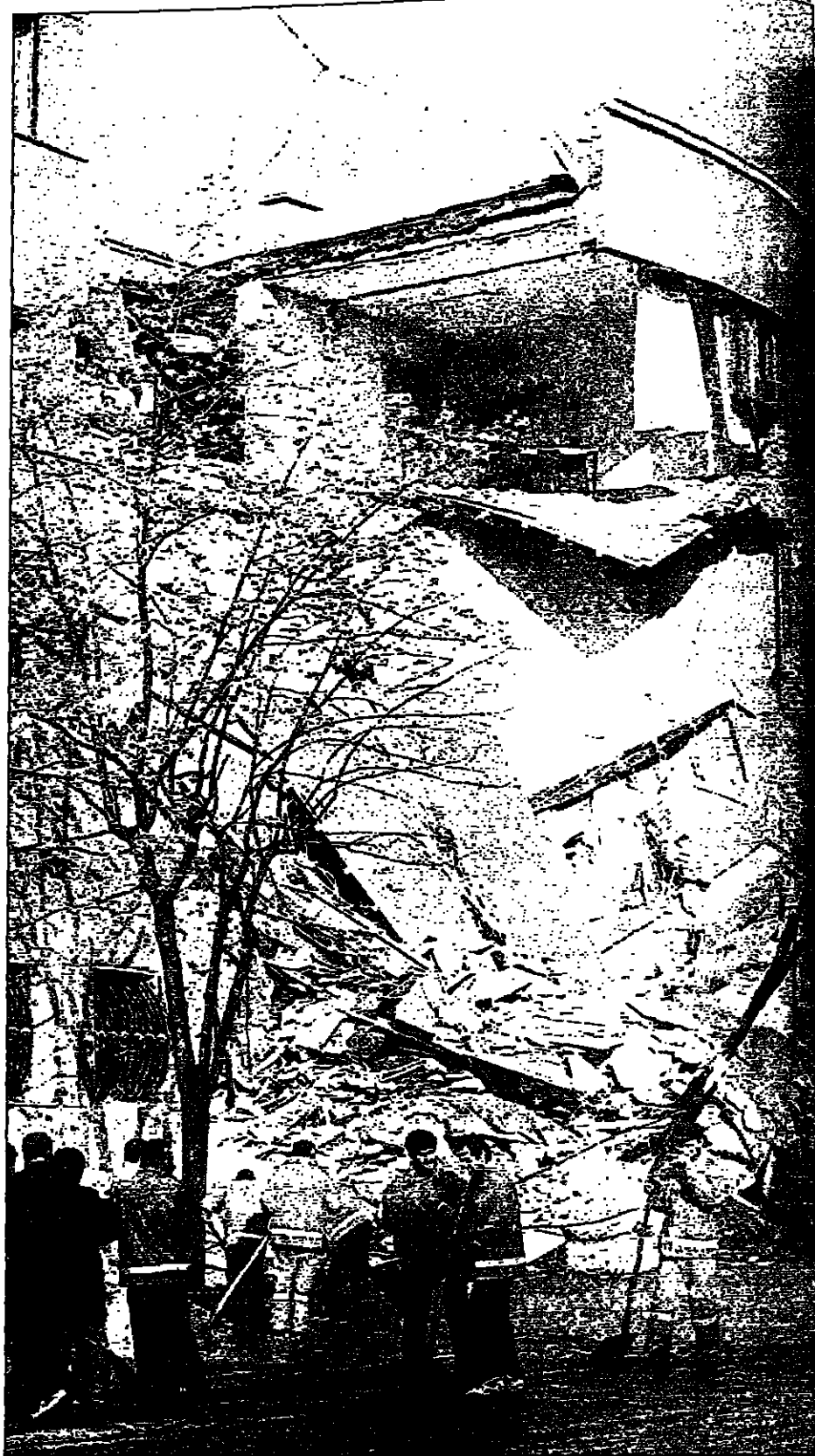
In Belgrade, it was reported that at least four civilians were killed in Nato raids on Saturday night and Sunday morning. A 52-year-old security guard was said to have died in the attack that woke all of Belgrade on Sunday morning, on the New Belgrade heating plant. Predrag Vasic, director general of Beoelektrana, told journalists that the plant was a civilian facility that provided heat for hundreds of thousands of people.

Two workers were reported killed and four injured in the attack on the power supply unit of Pancevo's oil refinery, near Belgrade, early on Sunday morning. The power supply plant was destroyed, disabling the refinery for the foreseeable future and increasing the likelihood of serious fuel shortages.

Six civilians were reported to have died as the fuel dump at Bogutovac, near the town of Kraljevo in central Serbia, blew up on Sunday morning. Those dead were said to include a warehouse keeper and two workers from a nearby train station, which was also damaged in the attack.



Smoke rising from the damaged Yugoslav air defence building after the Nato strike



Firefighters clearing up at the bombed air defence headquarters in Belgrade yesterday. Nato said that, with better weather, it was getting its tactics right

Missiles hit diesel supplies and wipe out Serb tobacco works

FROM TOM WALKER IN BELGRADE

NATO made its most comprehensive airstrikes against Yugoslavia on Sunday night and yesterday morning, hitting a variety of targets right across the country. Once again many of the facilities damaged had civilian uses.

The Yugoslav Army's daily press handout carried a map of Serbia that looked as if it had been in a paintball fight. Nato's missiles and bombs were reported as far north as Sombor, in Vojvodina, and attack sites then spread south through Belgrade, the central Serbian industrial belt and on

into Kosovo itself. The most significant strike was made against the headquarters of the Yugoslav Air Force in Zemun, on the outskirts of Belgrade. Missile damage was reported from Nis, the central city famous for its paratroop units, where many civilian buildings, including schools and university departments, were said to have been partly destroyed.

The press handout focused on the harm being done to the civilian population, and steered clear as usual of mentioning any military facilities

that might have been near some of the strike areas.

In Nis, for example, the only devastation mentioned was that inflicted on the city's metal processing and tobacco industries. Serbs were horrified to find that the factory that has given them the "Classic" cigarette brand is no more. Again oil and fuel dumps were struck, and there are fears that farmers will be unable to plant their spring crops for lack of diesel. The army also highlighted damage done to the monastery at Gracanica in Kosovo.

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The truth about prostate cancer: what everyone should know

- 3 out of 10 men over the age of 50 get prostate cancer: 9,000 men die from it each year in the UK, and it's on the increase!
- It is painful, and causes great suffering to its victims and their families
- Men are still largely unaware of prostate cancer, and so ignore the early symptoms
- Yet, despite its seriousness, scientists simply haven't had the resources to break significant new ground in prostate cancer research.

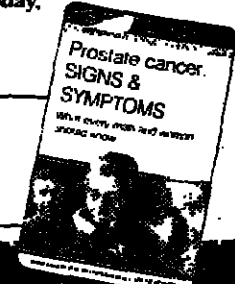
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BALKANS WAR: BORDER FEARS



Aslani Khaviti, a smallholder whose family has farmed land along the Macedonia frontier for generations. "If we all run away, we just leave our land to the Serbs," he says.

Farm minefields sow death

Frontier smallholders see their way of life becoming a casualty of war, writes Daniel McGrory in Blace

THE front line here is a hilltop meadow scattered with wild primroses where 57-year-old Aslani Khaviti grazes his cows.

Near the stone bridge his grandfather built across the river Lepelec, Serb soldiers have planted landmines beneath the neat lines of his peach and apple trees.

An armoured personnel carrier is parked in Aslani's orchard, the early-morning sun glinting off a cannon pointing at his whitewalled villa.

Bored with sitting around, now the town of Djeneral Janjkovic has been emptied of its Albanian population, Serb conscripts amuse themselves by encouraging packs of stray dogs to chase cattle into the minefield. A dozen beasts lay dead across the meadow.

Aslani crouches under a

hedgerow and stares down at the land his family has owned for six generations but which lies across the present borders of Macedonia and Kosovo.

"Borders never mattered to any of us before," he said, slowly rolling a cigarette as a Serb soldier watched him through binoculars.

"We are all farmers and share our land and water. I can't go to my animals now, so one by one they are being killed. When they have finished with the horses and cows, will they come for me?"

What is immediately noticeable in the narrow streets of Blace on the Macedonian side of the border, is that no wom-

en or children are to be seen. Aslani explains they were all moved away the day Nato airstrikes began on the hills beyond. The children of Blace were Macedonia's first refugees in this war, but in the chaos spilling out from Kosovo no one has noticed.

The men stand out of sight of the Serb guns, chain-smoking and debating whether they too should leave.

He offered the first of them bread and tea, but within an hour there were 100, then 1,000, and now more and Aslani cannot cope.

His father was killed by Serbs when he was two years old, but he points to the part of

Aslani says they should stay. "If we all run away, we just leave our land to the Serbs."

Overhead comes a distant rumble as Nato jets close over Kosovo again. Three days ago he watched a neighbouring village burn and now there is a steady stream of refugees moving down the mountain track that marks one edge of his farm.

Two hundred yards away, three Serb soldiers pick their way carefully across the meadow, past their minefield and down to the main road that runs to the border post. For the past 48 hours that road has been choked with cars. The line stretches to the horizon and beyond and those in the queue estimate that about 2,000 vehicles are stuck behind them in the mountains waiting to escape.

Two armoured personnel carriers are parked beside a cement factory in sight of the frightened families. Two huge red, white and blue Yugoslav

flags fly over the four lanes of apparently unmoving traffic. Vehicles that have run out of petrol or broken down are pushed to the side of the road, and their occupants told to complete their journey on foot.

Previously those on either side of the border did not need passports to cross back and forth, but now the Macedonian authorities have started making it as difficult as possible for the new arrivals to pass.

At night Aslani says he can hear gunfire. He points to the roof of the cement factory where a sniper can be seen, idly running his gunsight along the line of cars.

"We can never pretend the two communities were close, but I could never see a day where it would end like this. Can there be worse hatred anywhere in our world today?"

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BALKANS SUMMARY

Russia sends aid to Yugoslavia

Moscow: Russia has launched its promised operation to supply Yugoslavia with humanitarian aid. Yevgeni Primakov, the Prime Minister, announced following a telephone conversation with Gerhard Schröder, the German Chancellor, whose country holds the six-month presidency of the European Union. Shipments of medical supplies, clothes and foodstuffs are being sent by lorry, but it is not certain who the recipients will be.

Mr Primakov said that the political process had to be instantly revived to try to bring Belgrade and the Kosovo Albanians closer to a settlement. "The most important thing now is to end Nato's military campaign. I want to repeat that the barbaric attacks by Nato are a tragic mistake." Gennadi Seleznyov, the State Duma speaker, and Nikolai Ryzhkov, a leftist former Soviet Prime Minister, are due to visit Belgrade today. (AFP)

Challenge from Arkan

Bucharest: The Serbian warlord known as Arkan has vowed that his paramilitary Tigers will fight any Nato ground forces "to the last man". Speaking in an interview with a Romanian daily, *Jurnalul National*, he said: "It is when we fight on the ground that we will see who is the strongest. We are waiting for them." But he insisted that his Tigers — notorious for "ethnic cleansing" in Croatia and Bosnia — had not been sent into Kosovo. (AFP)

Moderate's peace call

Pristina, Kosovo: Ibrahim Rugova, the Kosovo Albanian moderate leader, met Yuri Kotov, the Russian Ambassador to Belgrade, and repeated calls for Nato to halt bombings and for Belgrade to be "more co-operative with the international community". He added: "The bombing should be stopped and a monitoring should be put in." He said that he was awaiting clearance to go to Macedonia to work for peace. (AFP)

Nato TV reaches Serbs

Belgrade: Blurred UHF television transmissions giving Nato's viewpoint on Kosovo were picked up by residents. Showing maps and a Nato insignia, a Serbian commentary said: "If only you knew what 'ethnic cleansing' was going on down there, you would be stunned. Milosevic is trying to show he is more powerful than he is. Is this the behaviour of a professional army?" Nato has confirmed that it is broadcasting into Yugoslavia. (Reuters)

Paris terrorism alert

Paris: French police have stepped up security in Paris and other big cities to counter the threat of Serb terrorism (Adam Sage writes). Intelligence service agents believe President Milosevic may order a military unit to mount terrorist bombing campaigns in an attempt to destabilise public opinion. They also fear isolated acts by Serb extremists in France. French police thwarted one such plot during the war in Bosnia.

Horseman of apocalypse

Moscow: Andrei Andronnikov, an actor and director, dressed as an ancient Russian warrior on horseback to ride past the US Ambassador's residence and fire an arrow carrying a message that the Kosovo conflict would end on American territory, police said. The message added: "Those who act against Slavs by the sword

BALKANS WAR: WEST'S WEAPONRY

THE HUNT FOR YUGOSLAV FORCES

THE AH64 APACHE MISSION

- 1 First company of Apaches sets off to hunt for Yugoslav armour from base in Albania
- 2 Second Apache company waits on alert in the air ready to take over from first wave
- 3 Search and rescue helicopters wait on alert

- 4 Scout helicopters flank the Apaches providing cover and target information
- 5 A10 joins the attack using Maverick missiles from 7.5 miles or its Gatling gun from about 2 miles
- 6 Target is located and lead company Apaches engage with Hellfire missiles at 5 miles, rockets at 3 miles and cannon at 2 miles
- 7 Weapons released they return to base and are replaced by second company keeping enemy under constant attack

THE AMERICAN A10 'WARTHOG' MISSION

Thunderbolt 'Warthog' attacks Serb tanks from low level, firing from a seven-barrel Gatling gun that spits out 65 x 30mm armour-penetrating projectiles every second.

Single-seater close air support fighter
Length: 53ft 4in Wingspan: 57ft 6in
Height: 14ft 8in Speed: over 520mph
Range: 620 miles

THE RAF HARRIER GR7 MISSION

Armed with BL755 cluster bombs, Harriers at low level will hit troops in the open and soft skin vehicles

Length: 46ft 4in
Wingspan: 57ft 6in
Height: 11ft 11in
Power: one Rolls Royce Pegasus turbofan engine
Speed: 661mph
Range: 590 miles (with tanks)

THE US ARMY A64 APACHE

Apache operates at earthhugging level and can shoot missiles with remarkable accuracy, capable of penetrating every type of armour

APACHE AH64 ATTACK HELICOPTER
Type: Two-seat all-weather attack helicopter
Length (inc rotors): 58ft
Max speed: 182mph
Armament: One 30mm M230 chain gun cannon; 16 AGM-114 Hellfire laser-guided missiles; 76 folding fin missiles
Range: 428 miles

T55 MAIN BATTLE TANK

The Yugoslav Army's staple T55 tank which will be vulnerable to both Apache and Warthog.
Hull length: 21ft
Combat weight: 35 tonnes
Maximum road speed: 31mph
Maximum range: 310 miles
Engine: V12 water-cooled diesel

Searching high and low for the enemy

NATO is about to move more aggressively into the low-level bombing phase of its campaign, marshalling Apache attack helicopters and aircraft armed with cluster bombs to hit the Yugoslav forces in Kosovo — if they can find them.

The Pentagon has promised that the deployment of the Apaches, which have a 430-mile range and can loiter in the target area before firing their missiles, will provide NATO with a capability "to get up close and personal to the Milosevic armour".

RAF Harriers and other allied aircraft set out on Sunday to hunt for Yugoslav troops and armour carrying out "ethnic cleansing" operations in Kosovo, but returned to their bases without dropping a single bomb. General Sir Charles Guthrie, the Chief of the Defence Staff, admitted: "They did not engage any targets. Indeed, none was found."

The problem is that the Yu-

goslav army commanders have been ordered to hide their tanks, artillery and armoured personnel carriers in woods and camouflaged positions to avoid being picked off by the awesome American A10 Warthogs and other Nato aircraft capable of low-flying, anti-tank missions.

As General Guthrie pointed out, however, the mere presence of these aircraft over Kosovo was acting as a deterrent, although some ethnic cleansing was still going on yesterday.

"This type of operation deters and suppresses Serb action and helps to achieve our aim of curbing the barbaric repression we have been hearing about," he said.

If the tactical bombing campaign is to enter a different level of intensity, Nato's anti-tank killing machine will have to score some major successes for the momentum of President Milosevic's ethnic cleansing.



The tanks in Kosovo are taking cover as Nato tries to target the armoured forces which carry out ethnic cleansing. Nato's air power could soon be harder to avoid, writes Michael Evans, Defence Editor

ing operation to be blunted and finally reversed. Yugoslavia's killing fields in Kosovo now have to become Nato's killing fields.

For the first time in nearly two weeks of Operation Allied Force, the issue of military casualties is likely to move to the forefront if Nato aircraft begin to locate and destroy Yugoslav armoured units on a significant scale. Although Belgrade admitted yesterday that there had been a number of dead and wounded following Nato attacks on two army barracks in the town of Vranje, so far this has not been a conflict about casualties.

Nato has suffered none,

apart from the physical battering meted out to the three captured American soldiers; and although Belgrade has claimed a number of civilian dead and wounded, there have been no reports of heavy casualties among the Yugoslav military.

While this may have more to do with Mr Milosevic's attempt to keep the Yugoslav population behind him by giving the impression that his nation's forces are immune from Nato's strikepower, an all-out attack by alliance aircraft on troops in Kosovo is likely to change the image of the war far more dramatically than the clinical destruction of

bridges, fuel depots and heating plants.

The problem for General Wesley Clark, Nato's Supreme Allied Commander, is that it will take time for the new firepower to become operational. The 24 US AH64 Apaches, each armed with eight Hellfire anti-tank rockets, will be a deadly addition to the strike force already in theatre. But it could take more than a week for them to be packed up at their base at Hiesheim in Germany, flown aboard cargo planes to Tirana, the capital of Albania, and reassembled for operations.

Nevertheless, while the A10s, RAF Harriers, armed

with cluster bombs, and B1B bombers, also with cluster munitions, take the battle to the ethnic cleansing battlefield in Kosovo over the next seven days, the announcement about the deployment of the formidable Apaches could add to the psychological stress which at least some of the Yugoslav troops must now be feeling as they hide in the woods to avoid Nato's tank-busting aircraft.

The latest Apaches can detect 128 potential targets in 30 seconds, select 16 and begin launching Hellfire missiles which are capable of destroying any known armoured vehicle from five miles. In the Gulf War, they operated in combination with other aircraft, such as the A10, firing Maverick missiles from about seven miles and the awesome Gatling "chain gun" from just over a mile.

The two pilots of an Apache use electronic systems to search for their targets in all

weathers and all battlefield conditions.

Apaches can also film a target area with a TV sensor, while concealed behind cover, and this played a significant role in the Gulf War in 1991 and is currently helping to keep the peace in Bosnia-Herzegovina, based at Tuzla in the north.

The structure of the Apache is designed to withstand hits from high-explosive rounds of up to 23mm calibre. Of greatest concern, however, will be the Yugoslav forces' portable, shoulder-launched, surface-to-air missiles.

The Apache can avoid the long-range systems by flying at low altitude, its radar signature hidden in the ground "clutter". But a single Yugoslav soldier with a man-pack Sam missile will be more difficult to avoid.

The 24 Apaches, and 2,600 American support troops, are to be part of what was yesterday called a "deep strike" package to be based in Albania.

The other ingredient will be 18 US Multiple Launch Rocket Systems (MLRS) which will have the ability to strike at targets all over Kosovo, drawing in Albania and making it vulnerable to any Yugoslav attacks.

Several villages in the north of Albania were hit by Yugoslav shells earlier in the campaign. Now, the proposed positioning of such potent American weapons on its soil will make it imperative for the alliance to defend Albania for the length of the Nato campaign, and beyond.

Hopes pinned to plane no one wanted

Nato's fabled tank-buster was almost left on the drawing board, Ian Brodie writes in Washington

JUST as they did in the Gulf War, military commanders have gratefully turned to the A10 Warthog as the only close ground support plane that can attack tanks, artillery and troops in Kosovo.

Ironically, the funny-looking A10 — ungainly, stubby and bulky — is the aircraft the US Air Force tried to kill. The production line was halted 13 years ago and by now all the A10s were supposed to be in retirement or farmed out to part-time National Guard units.

As it is, they were preparing to go into action today. Military sources said that in their initial foray the A10s would be hitting Serb tanks, yet again proving their worth at close range over much faster, high-flying fighter jets.

In the Gulf War, 174 A10s knocked out 1,200 of the 1,700 Iraqi tanks destroyed from the air and smashed 1,000 of the 1,200 artillery pieces. They also shot down two helicopters, went after Scud missile launchers, blew up bridges and roads and carried out search-and-rescue operations.

They could take a lot of punishment. There were nearly 400 shrapnel holes from an Iraqi ground-to-air missile in an A10 flown by Colonel David Sawyer of the

USAF. Both his engines and the tail were shredded, but he made it home.

Others limped back to base with part of a wing shot off, a hydraulic line dangling and the fuselage in holes. "Any other plane would have taken a dive with that kind of damage," said a Pentagon official. Five A10s were shot down, all at very low altitudes, the same number of F16s that were lost while flying much higher.

The A10 is not fast, sleek or sexy, but the punch it packs is formidable. Its seven-barrel, 30mm Gatling gun

can fire 70 armour-piercing bullets per second.

Some Iraqi tanks looked unscathed apart from a small puncture. A look inside, however, showed the destruction wrought by the fiery explosion from one A10 round. The A10 can also accurately deliver up to 16,000lb of laser-guided missiles and other bombs from racks slung under its wings and fuselage.

Flying at 30,000ft and at times below 1,000ft, the A10 is the most precise weapon in Nato's air arsenal.

The lone pilot has a titani-

um metal "bathtub" beneath the cockpit to protect him from ground fire. There are duplicate flight controls in case one system is knocked out by enemy fire. The A10 is quiet, sounding more like a vacuum cleaner than a plane, with the result that troops do not hear it until it is almost on top of them.

The bubble canopy on the cockpit gives the pilot all-round vision. The A10 is also highly manoeuvrable, with an ability to turn sharply on one wing almost perpendicularly. Its official designation is Thunderbolt II, but every-

one uses its nickname Warthog, out of mockery and affection.

The A10's difficult birth in the 1970s was a classic of Pentagon in-fighting. Air force officers saw their way to promotion through advanced combat jets. No one wanted to be known for their work on close air support. Eventually the army decided to build its own support plane, finally forcing the air force to act.

The A10's small but devoted band of supporters took dramatic steps to prove their baby's value as a tank-buster. With Israeli help, they brought together Soviet tanks captured in the Middle East wars, amassing 500 in California. Then they filmed A10s shooting them up. In 550 passes, they knocked out 350 tanks, four times the number predicted.

Even so, the A10 was kept alive only by the demands of Joseph Addabbo, a powerful congressman from Long Island where the A10 was built. When he died in 1986, the air force stopped the programme in its tracks.

Today, however, the A10 is the only fighter with a guaranteed long-term future in the US Air Force. All the others have a phase-out date for when newer fighters are built.

Clouds roll away and Harriers go hunting

FROM JOHN PHILLIPS IN GIOIA DEL COLLE

RAF HARRIER pilots have taken off in pursuit of Yugoslav mobile targets to bomb after the skies cleared to allow them to fly daylight operations without hindrance from bad weather.

Some flyers from No.1 Fighter Squadron waved from their cockpits at reporters watching on the edge of the runway at the Gioia del Colle base in southern Italy as six Harrier GR7s laden with bombs and missiles left in the bright sunshine that RAF planners had been awaiting for a week.

It was the first time that a daylight mission by the Harriers was not aborted because of weather conditions since the squadron began operations against Serb targets, an RAF spokesman Group Captain Ian Travers Smith said.

Once they were well into their sorties, pilots encountered a new kind of frustration when they learnt there were no suitable mobile targets to attack and they returned to base without dropping their bombs and without crossing into Yugoslav territory.

It was not disclosed what kind of mobile targets the Harriers were seeking but there was speculation it had been hoped to use them to bomb

some of the Serb troops or armour that had been surrounding villages in Kosovo and then driving out or killing civilian inhabitants.

"Their prime target today would have been mobile targets," the spokesman said. "During the period they were airborne no such opportunities presented themselves, so the Harriers returned with their bombs."

But the mission marked a "new phase" for the Harrier pilots, since clear-weather daylight operations mean the pilots can see the ground but the enemy can also see them, the spokesman said.

The tension at the base was almost tangible after the Harrier pilots began taking off at 12.20pm, the high-pitched whine of their engines turning into a roar.

The Harriers arrived back

in pairs; one carried bombs and the other, whose task was to designate targets by laser, did not.

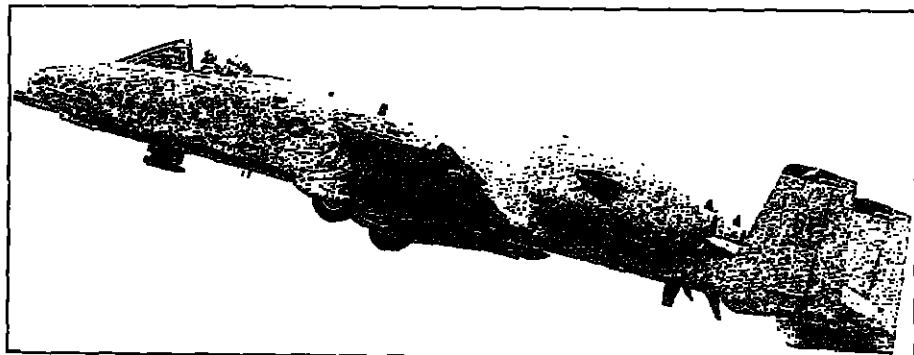
The pilots were then whisked off by bus to the squadron operations room to give brief mission reports that would be sent up the chain of command to strike command.

Then they were scheduled to spend up to three or four hours debriefing and analysing their flying with their operational commander.

Although no mobile targets were hit that time, their sorties were valuable experience, including another test of the strain of preparing to cross the border into enemy territory.

"The best moment is when you come back to this side of the border," Group Captain Travers Smith said. "It doesn't matter how long it takes to go out, but it always happens too quickly — each hour seems like a minute."

The determination of the pilots in the squadron to strike the Serbs was evident from the doors of two portable latrines that had been erected near the Harrier hangars. One had been decorated with a label marked Slobodan while the other was designated for militia leader Arkan.



The A10 Warthog was used as the scourge of Iraqi tanks during the Gulf War

Armed chiefs fear new Vietnam

FROM DAMIAN WHITWORTH IN WASHINGTON

US military chiefs warned President Clinton before the air campaign began that by itself it probably would not work and that they had serious reservations about becoming involved in Kosovo at all.

According to *The Washington Post*, General Hugh Shelton, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, led other senior commanders in questioning the basis for action in Kosovo. They are said to remain unconvinced that the air offensive will achieve its goal. But they are also extremely doubtful that ground troops should be introduced.

General Shelton and the heads of the services are acutely anxious that the US should not become embroiled in another Vietnam. Before airstrikes began, they challenged the "domino theory" outlined by Madeleine Albright, the Secretary of State, which maintained that losing Kosovo would destabilise the whole region. A similar argument was used over Vietnam.

Now they are unhappy about the escalation of the conflict, which they blame on bad weather and the need for Nato consensus on how to wage war. Such incremental increases in involvement were also characteristic of the Vietnam conflict.

The commanders had preferred that tougher non-military measures be given a chance to bite, including stringent economic sanctions.

Hawkish Albright driven by family history

FROM BEN MACINTYRE IN WASHINGTON

THE US Secretary of State, Madeleine Albright, knows about "ethnic cleansing": as a child she fled first Nazism and then Stalinism, as an adult she learned that her Jewish grandparents had perished in the Holocaust, and she is now pursuing a war in Kosovo as if on a personal crusade.

Ms Albright has long been seen as the most sharp-beaked of hawks within the US Administration, and it was largely her persistence that convinced President Clinton of the need for a bombing campaign, overriding the warnings of intelligence sources and the misgivings of senior military officials.

In Mr Clinton's own words: "She pushed and she pushed." But as the US and Nato enter the third week of bombardment with more military hardware pouring into the region, there are some who fear Ms Albright's own experiences and her feelings about her past, rather than considerations of diplomacy, may have pushed the alliance into a Balkan nightmare.

"Her personal history has taken over in Kosovo," one former associate told the US columnist Arianna Huffington. President Milosevic — former communist hardman, nationalist bigot and ethnic

cleanser — is an ogre tailor-made for Ms Albright, 62, whose own childhood and family fell victim to Europe's racial and ethnic animosities.

Ms Albright is one of the few diplomats addressing the humanitarian crisis at Kosovo's borders who knows what the life of a refugee is like. "We came to America after being driven twice from our home in Czechoslovakia, first by Hitler and then by Stalin," she said at her nomination ceremony.

The US Administration has consistently couched the Kosovo conflict in terms of genocide, comparing the actions of Mr Milosevic to those of Hitler. That language may be traced directly to the childhood experiences of the woman born Maria Jana Korbel.

Born in Prague in 1937, the daughter of Josef Korbel, a prominent Czech diplomat, she fled Czechoslovakia with her family when Hitler invaded in 1938, and spent the rest of the war in Kensington and then Walton-on-Thames. One of her earliest memories is of sitting under a steel table as bombs fell on London, and she makes no secret of the fact that, while most Americans look to Vietnam for an understanding of war, her focus is on an earlier conflict ignited



Madeleine Albright's critics say that her experiences as a victim of European conflicts have led her to see the Kosovo campaign as a crusade

by European dictatorship, aggression and ethnic hatred. "My mindset is Munich," she is fond of saying, for the memory of Neville Chamberlain's appeasement and its consequences for Czechoslovakia remain the defining component in her diplomatic philosophy. After the war, her father was appointed ambassador to Marshal Tito's Yugoslavia, where Madeleine was tutored by a governess to prevent her having contact with the loathed Communists.

In 1948, the family was again forced to flee Prague, this time when the Communists took over and stripped her father of his citizenship, to settle permanently in the US. Ms Albright's tumultuous

early life and hawkish inclinations place her in direct opposition to the so-called Powell doctrine, advocated by General Colin Powell, the former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, which holds that mili-

bo-Croat — one of her five languages — recalling how her family had been welcomed in Belgrade in her youth and insisting that Nato had no quarrel with the Serb people. She may have other memo-

attempted to skirt around a direct question on war crimes. "Don't give me that," Ms Albright shot back. "I'm from this region. I'm not naive." A vigorous advocate of airstrikes against Bosnian Serbs,

origins, and the deaths of three grandparents and other family members in Nazi concentration camps, soon after her appointment as Secretary of State.

It was, she said with remarkable understatement, a "major surprise".

Michael Dobbs, the *Washington Post* journalist who revealed her Jewish roots, has already dubbed the US Secretary of State the "spiritual patron" of the Kosovo crisis. When historians assess why the bombs began falling in Yugoslavia they will recall not only the troubled and complex history of the region, but also that of Madeleine Albright.

Diary, page 18

'We came to America after being driven twice from our home, first by Hitler and then Stalin'

tary action needs an overriding threat to US interests, a clear goal and a knockout punch. Not surprisingly, Ms Albright has always regarded the Balkans as her special preserve. Last week she broadcast an appeal to the Serbs in Ser-

ries, too. Once she was accosted by a Serb woman who screamed: "Why are you so awful to the Serbs?" She replied, in the same language: "Because they are awful!"

Mr Milosevic himself was once left in no doubt when he

Ms Albright's determination to stand up to ethnic aggression must have been redoubled by the discovery, two years ago, that she was herself Jewish. Raised as a Roman Catholic, now an Episcopalian, Ms Albright learnt of her

SURVIVAL

CAN DEPEND

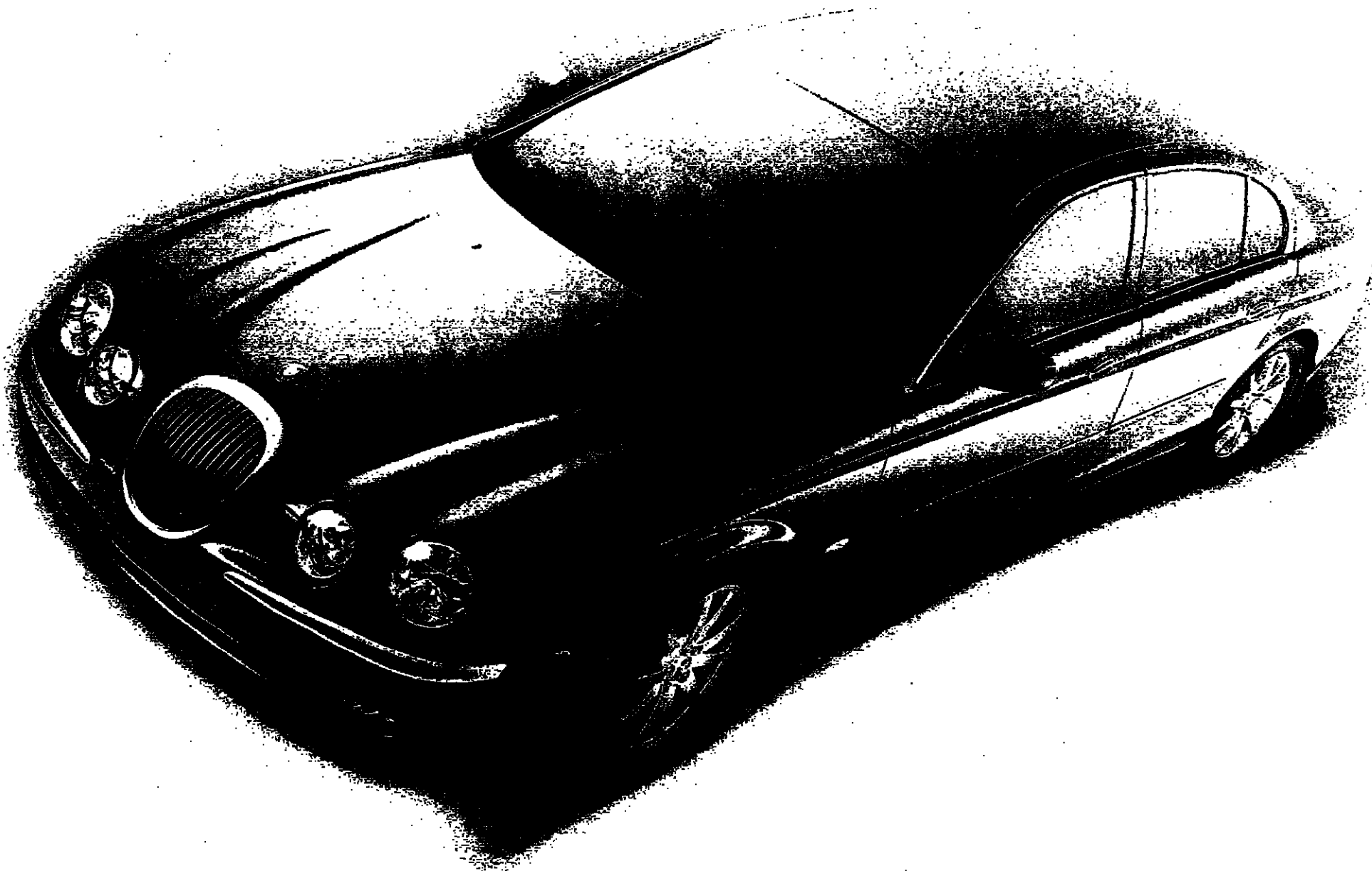
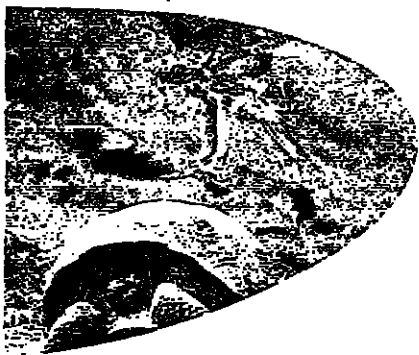
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Lockerbie suspects in Scottish custody

FROM STEPHEN FARRELL AT CAMP ZEIST

THE two Libyans suspected of carrying out the Lockerbie bombing were last night in The Netherlands awaiting trial under Scottish law at a specially-converted former US Air Force base.

Abdel Basset Ali al-Megrahi, 46, and Lamine Khalifa Fhimah, 42, agreed to be extradited to Scotland after being delivered to Dutch authorities at The Hague by Hans Corell, the United Nations chief legal counsel, after a 3½-hour flight from Tripoli.

The pair, who were indicted in 1991 over the December 1988 bombing in which 270 people died, were last night due to be handed over to Scottish police and taken to Camp Zeist, the 100-acre site near Utrecht where they are to be charged, committed and tried before three Scottish judges.

Mr Corell, 59, was first out of the aircraft to hand over the men's passports, as agreed in advance with the Dutch authorities. Both suspects were accompanied by a brother and their lawyer, but Mr Corell re-

fused to identify three other passengers aboard the Italian aircraft.

Speaking in Rotterdam afterwards, Mr Corell, a Swede, said: "Acting under the authority of Secretary-General Kofi Annan, I performed the task entrusted to him by the Security Council... to assist the Libyan government with physical arrangements for the safe transfer of the two accused in the Lockerbie case from Libya direct to the Netherlands."

He said that a report would now go to the UN Security Council on what he described as an "extraordinary and unprecedented" mission.

Mr Corell said the Libyans had not declared any intention to oppose extradition and added: "On no occasion have I

heard from the Libyan delegation any doubts expressed about the independence or impartiality of the Scottish court to be sitting in the Netherlands. On the contrary, it has been referred to with respect."

Scottish police armed with sub-machine guns yesterday patrolled inside the 7½ wire perimeter fence separating the 100-acre site, which has been declared Scottish territory for the duration of the trial, from scores of uninterested Dutch tourists wandering among the warplanes on display at the Military Aviation Museum next door.

Reinforcements with guard dogs arrived at the screened-off former barracks containing the temporary cells where the Libyans will be held while

the permanent courtroom and prison are finished. At the gates of the camp, Norman McFadyen, Procurator Fiscal for Lothian and Borders, confirmed that the delivery of the suspects would allow the prosecution team headed by Lord Hardie, the Lord Advocate, to "properly discharge" its responsibility "both to the people of Scotland and to the families of those who were killed".

He said that the trial would be "fair and proper" and that said "Today's handover signals we are an important step closer to bringing the tragic event of a decade ago to a dignified conclusion."

Pamela Dix, who lost her brother Peter, 35, was at The Hague yesterday to greet the men's arrival with a "tremendous sense of relief". She said: "It is a very emotional moment for me. We have waited for this time since November 1991. I think one of the most important things, the most important thing for me, is to find out the truth of exactly what happened."



Libyan TV picture of Abdel Basset Ali al-Megrahi, 46, and Lamine Khalifa Fhimah leaving Tripoli for The Netherlands

LINKS

www.fco.gov.uk/news/latest/news_from_the_foreign_office_on_the_lockerbie_handover
www.dpm.gov.uk/naab/5739a.htm Department of Transport report on the Lockerbie crash
www.law.gla.ac.uk/lockerbie/briefing_on_the_lockerbie_crash_by_the_university_of_glasgow_school_of_law
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Legal machine gears up for £100m battle

BY GILLIAN HARRIS, SCOTLAND CORRESPONDENT

ONCE the Lockerbie bomb suspects have been extradited their trial will be dealt with like any other court case under Scottish law.

The Libyans will make their first appearance before Sheriff Graham Cox, the sheriff principal of South Strathclyde, Dumfries and Galloway, within 48 hours of their formal arrest by Scottish police officers stationed at Camp Zeist.

Before they appear in court, Abdel Basset Ali Mohammed al-Megrahi and Lamine Khalifa Fhimah will have access to legal advice. Their defence team will be led by Kamal Maghur, a Libyan lawyer who has had a varied career as a judge, a government minister and an ambassador.

Mr Maghur will work alongside the suspects' Scottish defence lawyer, Alistair Duff, 44, who will appoint Scottish counsel to his team. His one appointment so far is Bill Taylor, QC, the only lawyer in Britain to be a Queen's Counsel in both Scotland and England, but by the time the full trial gets under way he is expected to have a legal team of six.

The short committal hearing will be held in private with only two United Nations' observers and a shorthand writer to witness the start of legal proceedings. Although a criminal case as serious as the Lockerbie bombing will ultimately be heard by the High Court, the first hearing must take place in front of a sheriff. The purpose of the hearing is to allow the prosecutors, Nor-

man McFadyen, the regional procurator fiscal for Edinburgh, and Jim Brisbane, the deputy principal Crown agent, to question the accused about the circumstances surrounding the allegations contained in the petition warrant.

Unlike committal hearings in England, where it is a function of the court to judge whether there is a case to be answered, in Scotland the case proceeds automatically to the High Court. The procurator fiscal, Mr McFadyen, will ask questions on behalf of the Crown, but the defendants need not answer. It is common for defendants to make no plea. The men will also be formally charged with the crimes outlined in the petition for the arrest warrant, which was issued on November 13, 1991.

The charges are murder, conspiracy to murder and contravention of the Aviation Security Act 1982. It is alleged that the two men, working for the Libyan Intelligence Services, placed a bomb on board Pan Am flight 103 for terrorist purposes in order to destroy the aircraft and in doing so killed all 259 passengers and crew as well as 11 people on the ground in Lockerbie.

At the end of the committal hearing the two accused will be committed for trial. They will be held in custody as defendants cannot be bailed on a murder charge in Scotland.

The case, which will cost British taxpayers an estimated £100 million, is expected to begin early next year.

Tartan passion of UN lawyer

FROM JAMES BONE IN NEW YORK

THE United Nations legal adviser who escorted the Lockerbie suspects to Holland has a penchant for wearing a kilt, playing the bagpipes and reciting Burns poems — even though he is Swedish.

Hans Corell, the UN's top lawyer, has been obsessed with Scotland since studying there as a 16-year-old exchange student.

Colleagues say the distinguished international lawyer formed a life-long friendship with a Scottish Presbyterian minister who encouraged him to take bagpipe lessons and study Burns's poetry.

In many ways the baby-faced bureaucrat is the antithesis of the dashing UN troubleshooter Giandomenico Picco, who freed the British and American hostages held in Lebanon. If Si-gnor Picco was the UN's James Bond, Mr Corell is its George Smiley.

After receiving a law degree at the University of Uppsala, he started as a court clerk, becoming a judge in petty criminal cases before joining his country's justice ministry, where he became an expert in international law.



Corell: plays the pipes and recites Burns

The apparently placid Swede has an eccentric side, however. On several occasions he has shocked UN staff by attending office parties dressed in full tartan regalia and puffing on his own set of pipes.

At the annual dinner of UN correspondents two years ago, he entertained giggling reporters with a thickly accented rendition of Burns's "To A Mouse".

Mr Corell's Scottish connection has been kept quiet during negotiations with Libyan officials over the surrender of the two Lockerbie suspects. A smiling UN official said: "I am glad it did not come out until after the deal. Libya would have said he was a Scottish agent."

stag cut
 shine bac
 Golden



Public invited
 to see royal
 bride arrive

Stag cull puts shine back on Golden Mile

A DRUNKEN young man throws a flurry of punches outside a nightclub in Blackpool. He is arrested immediately, bringing his part in the night-time pantomime of kiss-me-quick fun, frantic clubbing and laddish boozing to an abrupt end.

Still spitting indignation for the benefit of excited teenage girls shivering in strapless party dresses in the cold Easter weekend night, the young man is ushered none too gently into a police car. He is destined to spend a night in the cells and become one more statistic in Operation Arrival. Launched by Lancashire Police ten days ago, its aim is to clean up the town's notorious Golden Mile, a sprawl of garishly lit pubs and clubs.

The quarter of a mile of coastline on either side of Blackpool Tower is the No 1 destination for stag and hen parties.

The revelers come to the town, a working-class fantasy land, to let their hair down. But in recent years their behaviour has descended into wild lousiness: groups of men drink in the streets, square up for fights, urinate in doorways and devise increasingly imaginative ways to celebrate the stag tradition.

The victim, usually drunk and incapable, is often stripped and tied to a lamppost or car bumper with rolls of Cellophane. Around 2am, when up to 30,000 young people pour out of the clubs, streaking has become a ritual.

Police officers working on Operation Arrival swamp known troublespots at peak times — dozens of them, all highly visible in bright yellow jackets. Their brief is not to wait until trouble happens, but to steam in before it kicks off.

Even before the holiday weekend was over, the operation was being hailed as a success, with Lancashire Police de-

Blackpool police are taking a tough line with louts giving the resort a bad name. Russell Jenkins watches them in action

livering crime figures of which most chief constables can only dream: crime was down overall last month by 31 per cent. Detective Sergeant Pat Gill, recruited from the divisional intelligence unit, said the operation was being run like a major incident. An operations centre has been set up in the gym at headquarters. From here, up to 100 officers are despatched to the front line.

On Good Friday night, pubs such as Cahoots and Brannigans — motto "drinking, dancing, cavorting" — were spew-

'We are saying to visitors that this is a nice, fun place'

ing out noisy, drink-filled men in shirtsleeves, and even noisier girls, clutching bare arms to keep warm. As they moved from bar to club, heading for Heaven and Hell, Rumours, the Palace or Jellies, they passed under the watchful eye of uniformed police stationed at every 50 yards. The hopelessly drunk were

picked up; those carrying beer bottles were told to "get rid".

PC Simon Copley, 6ft 8in, stopped a man urinating in the doorway of Pricebusters. A man in a check shirt was thrown out of Cahoots, a new venue on the mile, for pouring beer on dancers from the balcony. "It's his stag party, but his friends are staying inside," PC Robin Hardiman said. "Some friends."

Minutes later, the two constables were on the scene when the young man started throwing punches outside Coral Island. Within seconds PC Copley was throwing his rugby player's bulk into the fray, slamming the offender against the shuttered doors of Mr B's

amusement centre. "This is typical of the kind of thing that happens: little skirmishes," PC Copley said. At one time they would have been warned and let go. "Now we arrest them. He will either have to be bound over or pay a small fine. The real punishment is a night in the cells and an appearance in court."

Superintendent Ian McPherson, the operations manager, said: "We are trying to go through an educational process with visitors. We are saying to them, 'This is a nice fun place to be, but enjoy it in a safe way.' The officers are not there to be intimidating, but friendly and fair. It seems to be working."



Police patrols make themselves visible on the Golden Mile in Blackpool at night and are ready to put a stop to any mayhem as soon as it starts



The Golden Mile is a prime venue for hen parties

Public invited to see royal bride arrive

By RUTH GLEDHILL, RELIGION CORRESPONDENT

PRINCE Edward and Sophie Rhys-Jones are to invite 2,000 members of the public inside the precincts of Windsor Castle for their wedding in June.

Applications are to be invited for tickets to view the couple entering and leaving St George's Chapel, spiritual home to the Order of the Garter, which stands inside the castle walls.

More than 500 guests have been invited to the service, including Tony and Cherie Blair, Lord Lloyd-Webber, Chris Tarrant and Billy Connolly. The wedding will be conducted by the Right Rev Peter Nott, Bishop of Norwich, who has become a close friend during the couple's visits to Sandringham, which lies within his diocese.

The 2,000 members of the public will be allowed to stand in the lower ward area of the castle precincts, the area that is normally open to the public. Buckingham Palace will give details of how to obtain tickets in the next few weeks.

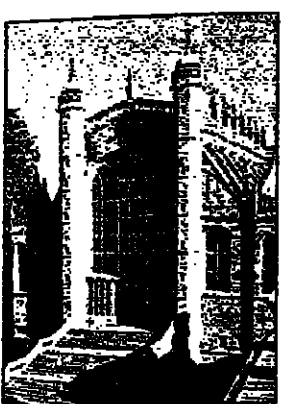
The concept of public access to the ceremony has been borrowed from the annual Garter Day Service at St George's, which is attended by the Queen and Duke of Edinburgh. This year it will be held on June 14, five days before the wedding.

The Garter, the oldest extant monarchical order of

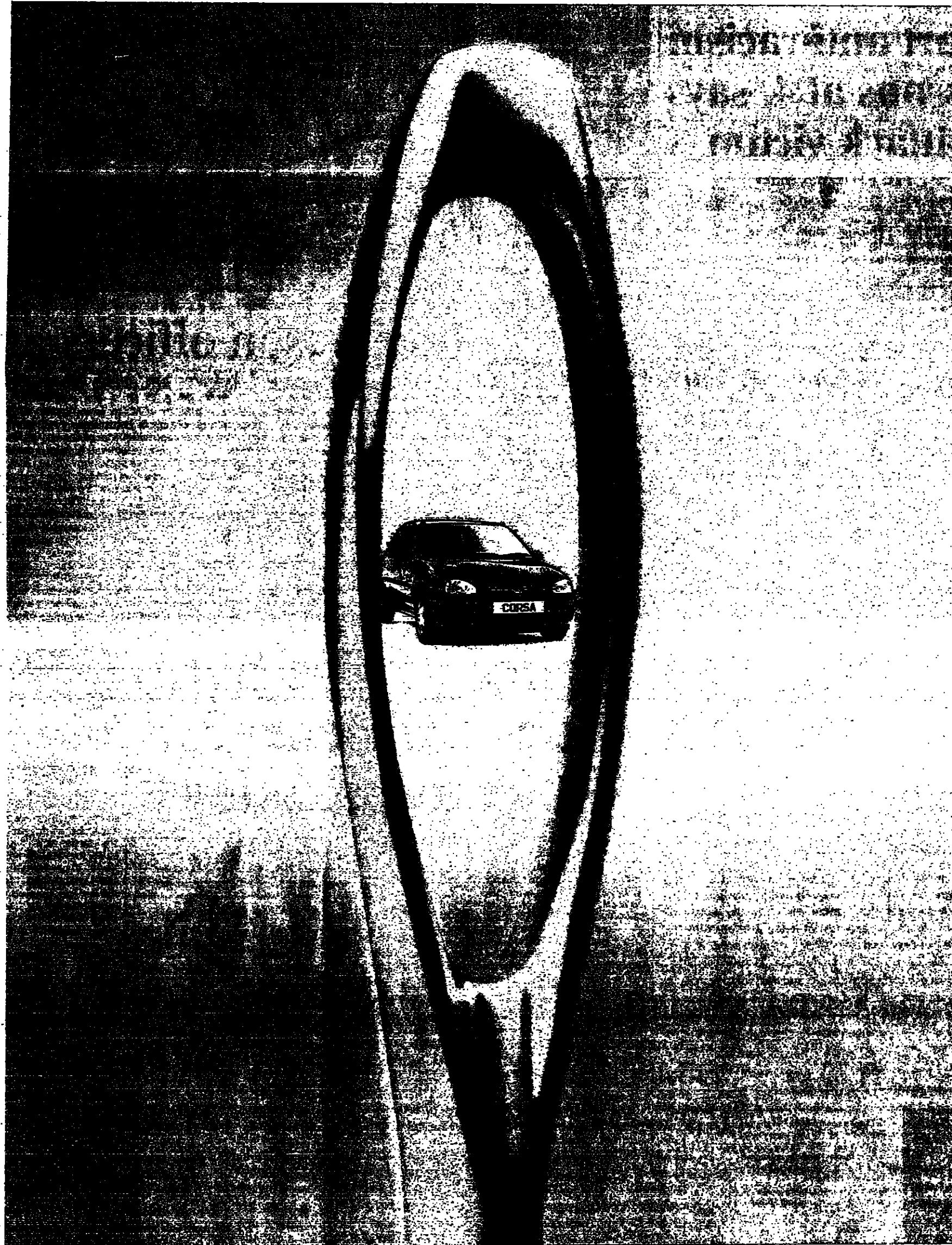
chivalry, was founded by Edward III in 1348 after the capture of Calais, with King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table in mind. On Garter Day, 2,000 members of the public are invited into the castle precincts to watch the arrival and departure of members of the Royal Family as well as the 24 Knight Companions with the Royal Knights, Foreign Knights and Ladies of the order.

The couple, both 34, had hoped to keep the wedding as private as possible. Prince Edward's television company, Ardent Productions, is expected to film the ceremony for broadcast, with the profits going to a new charitable trust under the control of the couple.

Helen Rumbelow, page 18



St George's Chapel: 500 guests will be inside



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Strike plan to save teachers at bad schools

By JOHN O'LEARY
EDUCATION EDITOR

THE largest classroom union agreed a programme of strikes yesterday designed to prevent teachers in failing schools from being sacked.

Hundreds of teachers in schools that make insufficient progress within two years of failing an inspection are having to apply for their own posts under the Government's "Fresh Start" scheme. Most lose their jobs, the annual conference of the National Union of Teachers was told, as schools are restructured under new leadership.

The Government's programme aims to rescue failing schools by closing them and re-opening them under a new name. But delegates at the conference agreed unanimously to ballot for industrial action if the policy led to redundancies among teachers.

Doug McAvoy, the NUT's general secretary, told the meeting in Brighton that teachers in failing schools, far from

TEAMWORK PLEA

The president of the second biggest teaching union called yesterday for "teamwork and sharing" rather than confrontation with the Government. Bill Morley, president of the National Association of Schoolmasters and Union of Women Teachers, made his speech calling for a spirit of mutual accommodation at the opening of the organisation's annual conference in Eastbourne.

being sacked, should be paid more than their colleagues elsewhere. "It is difficult to imagine a teacher who would want to apply for a job in a school that is in need of special measures."

"Who would want to apply for a job if the likelihood was that the teachers would do their best to turn round the school, yet face the prospect of

a clearout of staff if it doesn't come out of special measures?"

Kevin Doherty told delegates that he had been made redundant from George Orwell School, in Islington, North London, and the majority of his colleagues had not applied for their jobs back when the local authority decided to close the school and turn it into an arts and media college. "Can you imagine what it has been like for those pupils in schools that have known they are going to be closed down over a period of a year? It has been extremely unsettling."

Anne Antonio, of the Brighton and Hove branch, said that only three of the 43 teachers at Marina High School had been guaranteed their jobs under a Fresh Start scheme. "Our members are facing redundancy. How many more around the country will face them same?"

When Marina High was the Stanley Deason School, in the 1980s, it was popular with the middle-class residents of Kempdown, Brighton, but the demand for places has dwindled since it failed an inspection in 1996. A new head teacher was appointed last week and the classroom posts will be filled soon.

Andrew Swainston, of Lambeth in South London, said Lillian Bayliss School, one of 18 to be "named and shamed" by ministers shortly after the Government came to power, was being restructured under the Fresh Start programme. None of the teachers applying for their old jobs had so far been guaranteed employment in September.

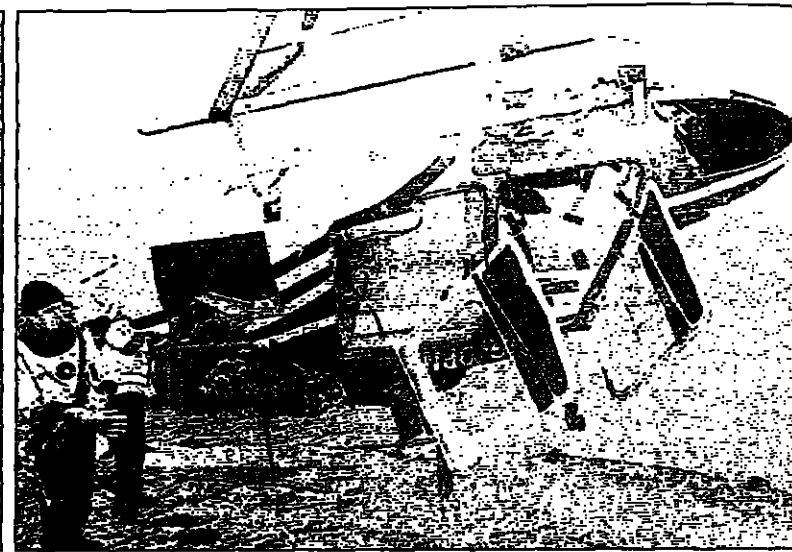
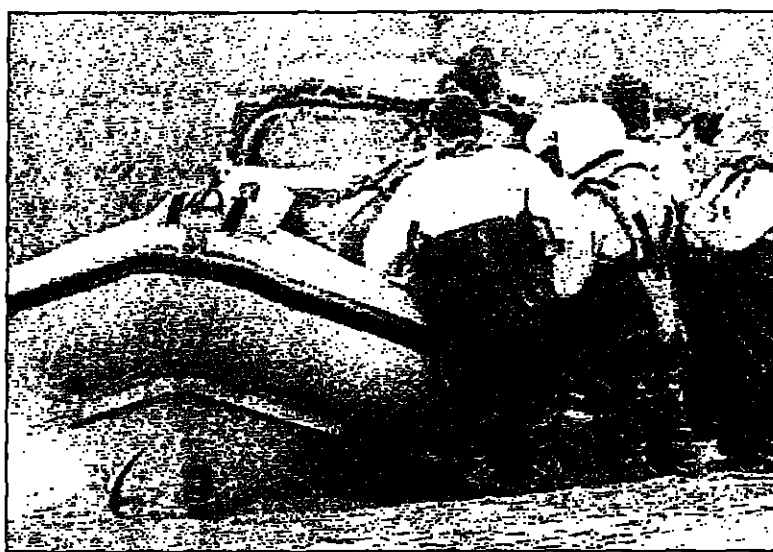
Mr Swainston said that, five years ago, black teachers had formed more than half the staff of the school. By September, there would be none on full-time contracts. Martin Reed, for the union's executive, said that the Government's approach was scapegoating teachers for more deep-seated problems. "Fresh Start is a con. It's a betrayal of the education service, a betrayal of teachers and, more than anything, it is a betrayal of children in those schools."

In a separate debate, delegates restated the union's claim for the equivalent of a four-day week to give teachers more time to prepare lessons and mark work.

The demand comes as part of the cross-union campaign for a national contract for teachers, guaranteeing low class sizes and a break every two hours.



Air-sea rescue: the lifeboat crew return with the two survivors from the helicopter that crashed off Lyme Regis yesterday, bottom left, and then carry ashore Lisa Burgess, the injured pregnant woman, above. The helicopter, below right, was later recovered from the sea. Full story, page 1



Start anti-racism lessons at 4, says attack victim

By OUR EDUCATION EDITOR

A BLACK teacher who was the victim of a violent racist attack at her South London primary school called yesterday for anti-racist education from the age of four.

Alison Moore, who addressed the National Union of Teachers' conference with her arm in a sling as a result of injuries sustained in the attack 14 months ago, told delegates that she had not recovered psychologically, either. Having told the conference in an emotional address a year ago that she was looking forward to returning to school, she still had not been able to do so on a permanent basis.

The 31-year-old teacher was attacked in the playground by four white youths after staying late at Sandhurst junior school, in Lewisham. She has since had death threats and had National Front slogans daubed on her front door.

Ms Moore told a fringe meeting that children should receive anti-racist education "from reception class to university". Lessons should include

African history and awareness of other cultures, including their music and food.

"Even the most hard-core racists go out at the weekend to have a curry," Ms Moore said. "Why are they having curry or buying Chinese food? It is because we are contributing to society, and that needs to be stressed so that some myths can be eradicated." Ms Moore added: "Black people did not come to England to take people's jobs or take away members of the opposite sex or drain the social security system. We are here because we were invited here. We are here because hundreds of years ago Britain went into what is now called the Third World and plundered it, as well as taking people as slaves."

The conference unanimously backed a motion calling for the national curriculum to include anti-racism as an integral and explicit part. It also demanded that teacher training courses be revised to include the subject.

Freemason officers are given ultimatum

By STEWART TENDLER, CRIME CORRESPONDENT

JACK STRAW has given chief constables three weeks to set up voluntary registers for police officers to declare whether they are Freemasons.

The Home Secretary's demand comes as a survey by *The Times* found that only a small minority of forces have responded to growing pressure from MPs and ministers for action to ease public anxiety about the influence of Freemasons in the justice system.

Today all 43 forces in England and Wales will receive a letter from Mr Straw urging them to have registers in place by the end of this month. Home Office officials say that, if forces do not set them up, or officers do not sign them, the Home Secretary will legislate for compulsory registers. The reg-

isters would be used to investigate complaints of bias or corruption.

Three years ago, chief constables accepted that police should be more open about Freemasonry, but the *Times* survey found that just two forces had registers for all ranks. Two others had them only for senior officers and five more were putting registers in place, but others have no plans to monitor Masonic membership.

The voluntary registers are seen by the Home Office as a way of testing how well checks can work before a decision is taken on the next move. Mr Straw also plans changes so that all police recruits will have to declare whether

they are Freemasons, and legislation to open registers to public inspection.

But the *Times* survey shows that many chief constables will not act unless the registers are compulsory. The survey brought a response from 35 forces, of which 25 have no plans for registers. Only the Derbyshire force and Avon and Somerset have registers. The Derbyshire register has one entry out of a force strength of 1,700.

South Wales has a register for high-ranking officers. Dyfed-Powys has a register for all officers from the rank of superintendent upwards, but no one is registered as a Freemason. The Sussex force is launching a policy that officers

cannot have undeclared interests and they are to sign individual statements.

Sir Paul Condon, Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, attacked police membership of lodges three years ago. His force is planning a register, as are Devon and Cornwall, Hertfordshire, Merseyside and North Wales.

The forces without plans for registers include Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Cheshire, City of London, Cumbria, Dorset, Durham, Essex, Greater Manchester, Hampshire, Humberside, Kent, Lancashire, Leicestershire, Lincolnshire, Northamptonshire, Northumbria, South Yorkshire, Staffordshire, Suffolk, Warwickshire, West Mercia, West Midlands, West Yorkshire and Wiltshire.



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THERE'S NO SUBSTITUTE FOR THE OU EXPERIENCE

Police praise both sides for peaceful start to parades

By AUDREY MAGEE

THE first of the year's loyalist parades passed off peacefully in Belfast yesterday after nationalist residents agreed to call off protests. The new spirit of compromise, bolstered hopes that the 3,000 parades during the marching season would be largely trouble-free.

The Apprentice Boys parade along the mainly nationalist Lower Ormeau Road in South Belfast has ended in violence in recent years. The mood yesterday was very different and police praised both sides for their restraint; community leaders hoped it would set an example.

The Apprentice Boys have paraded along the Lower Ormeau Road since 1904. However, nationalist residents have disputed their right to march, leading to a ban on the parade since 1995. It was banned again this year by the Parades Commission and nationalists, in an act of reconciliation, abandoned their plans to hold a 15-hour counter-demonstration. Instead, they stayed at home as police at a lightly manned barricade waited for the arrival of 11am of 30 members of the Ballynareigh Club, walking towards the city centre to join thousands of other Apprentice Boys in the annual Easter Monday parade.

The Ballynareigh Apprentice Boys marched peacefully to the barrier and handed in a letter of protest to the police. Tommy Cheevers, a leading member, said: "It is so disap-



Apprentice Boys making their way to the barricade

pointing that [at a time when] we are trying to bring about change in our country, a bit more tolerance, a bit better understanding of each other, that the people now running away from dialogue are the residents."

The Apprentice Boys, who were then based to the centre of Belfast, offered to hold talks with residents to resolve the dispute. However, Gerard Rice of the Lower Ormeau Residents Committee dismissed a suggestion of talks as a "fabrication".

Despite the bickering, police and community leaders were delighted that the parade passed off peacefully. The RUC praised both sides "for managing to reach a peaceful compromise", while community leaders hoped the outcome would serve as guidance to the half dozen highly controver-

sial parades to be held across Northern Ireland this summer.

The most difficult is at Drumcree in Portadown, where Orangemen are still camped out, demanding the right to walk down the nationalist Garvaghy Road. The men have been there since early last July.

The Government is making behind-the-scenes attempts to resolve the standoff. Tony Blair met both sides in the dispute last week during his marathon session of talks at Hillsborough Castle.

David Trimble, the First Minister and leader of the Ulster Unionist Party, is under increasing pressure to meet the residents of Garvaghy Road, which forms part of his constituency, in an attempt to defuse the potential for serious conflict this summer.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Banks open for savings deadline

Banks stayed open yesterday to cope with savers aiming to beat the midnight deadline for Peps and Tassas. Pep sales for March were up by about 30 per cent on last year, the Halifax said. About £1.5 billion has flooded the stock market in ten days, and could push it to a new high tomorrow. *Isa demand, page 44*

Boy, 2, drowns

A boy aged two drowned after falling from a pleasure boat into the Thames. He had been playing with his brother and sister while their father, from Windsor, renovated the vessel at Donnington Bridge.

Presenter moved

The broadcaster Sheena McDonald, who was seriously injured when she was hit by a police van in London in February, has been transferred to a hospital in her home town of Edinburgh.

Pate withdrawn

Safeway has withdrawn a make of Belgian pâté after customers in Horne Bay, Kent, had symptoms of food poisoning. Shops are telling customers not to eat the delicatessen's Farmhouse Pâté.

Ratted on poteen

Irish police found dead rats in a vat of poteen during a raid on an illegal distillery in a remote part of Co Donegal. Inspector Greg Sullivan said: "This is a warning to anyone not to touch the stuff."

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MSPs will demand more pay

Jason Allardyce on calls for Holyrood salaries to equal those of MPs

MEMBERS of the Scottish parliament are to use its historic first term to demand a 15 per cent pay increase on their £40,000 salaries.

Tories, Liberal Democrats and Scottish Nationalists plan to fight a pay settlement approved by the Government because it would give MSPs a basic salary £6,000 less than that paid to Westminster MPs. The opposition parties claim that the Senior Salaries Review Board settlement accepted by Donald Dewar, the Scottish Secretary, last week showed "contempt" for the new administration.

Because no single party is likely to emerge with a majority, Labour is likely to be outvoted on the issue.

The Liberal Democrat MP Donald

Gorrie, who is standing for Holyrood, said that MSPs deserved as much as Members at Westminster because they would be at least as busy. He said: "I am sure this matter will be raised in the parliament early on. I will certainly support parity with Westminster."

Mr Gorrie is also furious that the Government has agreed an allowance limit for office and staff of £39,000 a year, £10,000 less than at Westminster. "I suspect an edict has gone out that no impression may be created that Holyrood is on a par with Westminster," he said.

Party spokesmen for the Tories

and the Scottish National Party confirmed that they would support moves in Holyrood to bring MSP pay into line with that of their Westminster counterparts. MSPs are expected to clock up between 900 and 1,000 hours a year, compared with the 1,300 of Westminster MPs.

A move by MSPs to declare Scotland a nuclear-free zone could lead to constitutional tensions between London and Edinburgh. A powerful cross-party alliance of candidates likely to be elected to Holyrood has agreed to back a motion calling for the withdrawal of nuclear weapons from Scotland, including three Tri-

dent submarines based at Faslane near Glasgow.

The anti-nuclear group includes five Labour candidates likely to be elected, and Scottish National Party candidates who expect around 45 of their number to win seats. Several Liberal Democrat candidates have also promised to back the motion, which was suggested by Scottish CND. It could be enough to tip the balance, in a vote, against Labour and Tory MSPs who will argue that Britain must retain its nuclear deterrent and keep it in Scotland.

Although responsibility for nuclear weapons is reserved at Westminster,

losing a Holyrood vote on the issue would be a blow for the Prime Minister and Mr Dewar, who is likely to lead the Scottish parliament.

Anti-nuclear campaigners believe a successful vote in Holyrood would send a powerful message to the Ministry of Defence. The SNP has given warning that it may seek to embarrass the MoD further by holding a referendum on the issue in Scotland.

Johann Lamont, a Labour candidate and CND member in Glasgow, said she would back an anti-nuclear motion and call for the parliament to initiate a debate on nuclear disarmament. She said that it was still the policy of the Scottish Labour Party to oppose Trident and that Labour MSPs should reflect the views of the party.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Mustard gas found on tip

Chemical warfare agents including mustard gas and phosgene have been unearthed in a Wiltshire village. More than 100 glass phials were found in an old rubbish tip 400 metres from cottages at Winterbourne Gunner. Staff at the Chemical and Biological Defence Centre at Porton Down have confirmed that the containers were full of liquid containing chemical warfare compounds. It is believed the phials date from before the Second World War. Troops from a specialist ordnance disposal unit of the Royal Engineers have been working for months to check fields around the village for buried munitions. They say the area is likely to contain other rubbish pits. An army spokesman said scientists had calculated that the risk from a leak or breakage of any of the containers would have extended only about 50 metres from the pit, which is on a ministry land.

Police seize £20m drugs Child murder plot remands

Four men were arrested when police seized drugs worth £20 million as they were being transferred to a van at a layby near Newark, Nottinghamshire, from a lorry that had travelled from the Continent. Among the haul were 250kg of cocaine and amphetamines and 100kg of cannabis resin. A National Investigation Services spokesman said: "This is without question one of the biggest ever drugs hauls in Britain." Police had followed the van from the North West. The four men will appear in court in Manchester.

Two men were remanded in custody yesterday charged with plotting to kill young girls. Paul Thomas, 46, and Michael Williams, 49, were both remanded to appear at Wolverhampton Magistrates' Court on April 13. Elkington, of no fixed abode, and Williams, of Wolverhampton, appeared before Stipendiary Magistrate Roman Berez, charged with conspiracy to murder female children aged between two and seven on a date between March 29 and April 3 this year.

Memorably card sharp

A labourer who can recite every word in the Book of Revelation is expected to be named in the next edition of *The Guinness Book of Records* for memorising a pack of shuffled cards. John Burrows, 37, of Tontrefail, South Wales, memorised all 52 cards in a freshly shuffled pack in 34.35 seconds. He has moved on to his local telephone directory, from which he can remember all the names and numbers up to H. He started memory training in 1986 to give him the edge in poker games.

Cheese chase Yemen trial ultimatum

The annual cheeserolling races down a hillside in Gloucestershire are to resume in May after being cancelled last year because of safety fears. In 1997 there were 33 casualties as people taking part in the four races at Cooper's Hill, near Cheltenham, came to grief. Now the cheeserolling committee says it has made proper safety provisions for the event on Spring Bank Holiday Monday, when about 40 people at a time will pursue a 7lb Double Gloucester down the hill. The event attracts about 5,000 spectators.

The judge in the Yemeni case against eight Britons accused of terrorism told defence lawyers to end their defiance of proceedings before the trial begins tomorrow. Judge Jamal Muhammad Omar said: "If they do not, other lawyers will be chosen." The seven lawyers pulled out of the trial a week ago in protest at not being allowed to meet their clients privately in prison. Tony Blair has written to the Yemeni Government calling for the suspects to be examined by doctors, and for the lawyers to be allowed access.

Baby's year catching up



She is a year old, but at 5lb Kallie Rogers weighs just over the average for a newborn baby. Kallie, above, was given only hours to live after being delivered three months prematurely, weighing 12oz. Her mother, Sheila, of Heathfield, Devon, said: "Her skin was almost transparent, like cling-film only a muddy colour. We refused to give up hope that she would survive." Kallie faces years of medication for her weak liver and kidney but, despite her newborn appearance, is struggling to act like any other one-year-old. She has cut her first tooth and is trying to crawl.

New Year baby race sparks rush on chemists

BY ELEN RUMBLOW

THE first clear evidence of a millennium baby boom has come from record sales in family planning products as the key day approaches.

If a couple want to become parents on New Year's Day, the ideal time for conception is this week. Most experts consider Friday to be the best date.

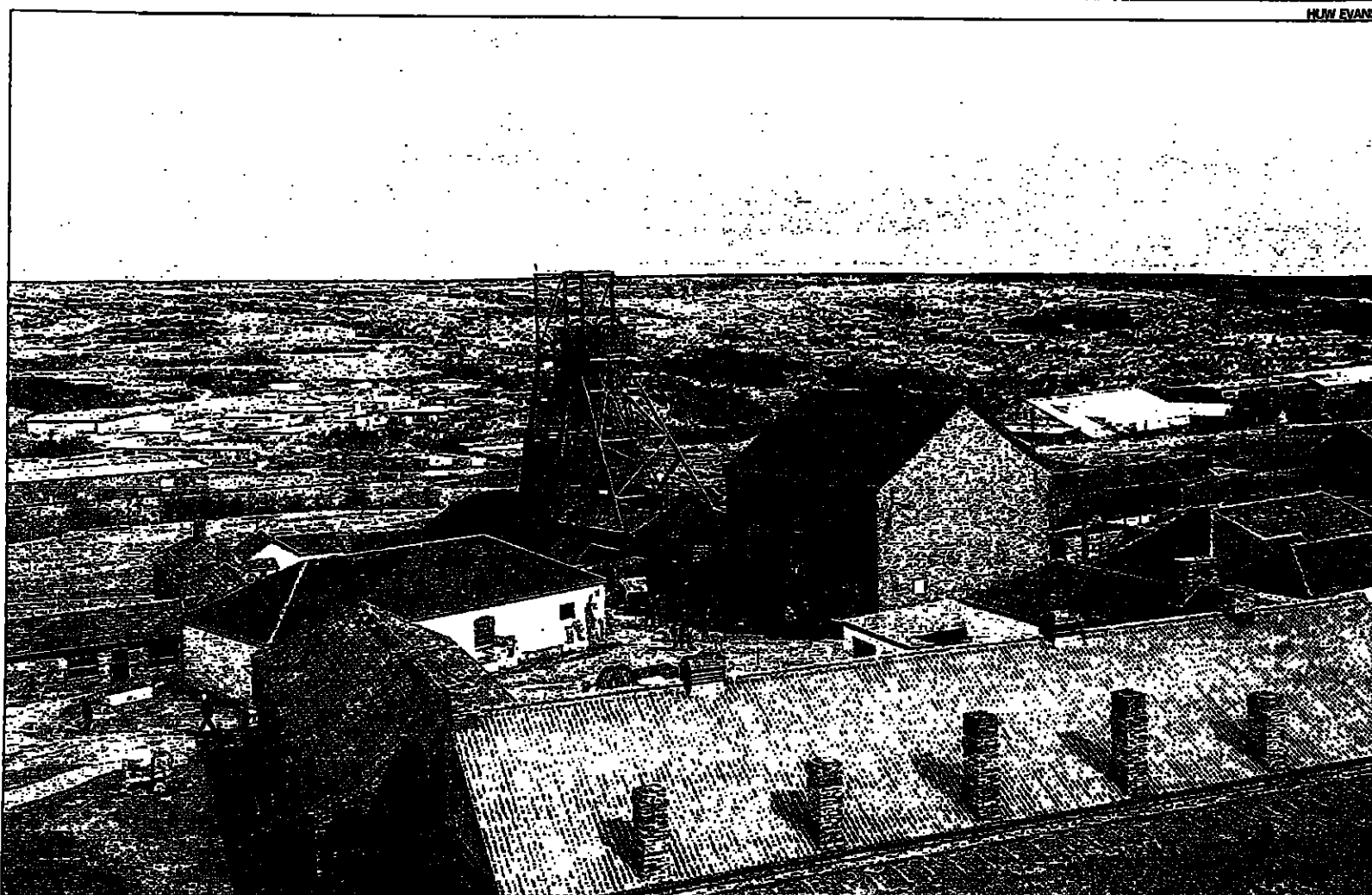
Cheists have reported large laps in sales of certain products connected to planned parenthood: folic acid tablets, ovulation prediction tests and pregnancy tests. However, family planners gave a warning yesterday against decisions based on novelty, rather than genuine care.

The Superdrug chain of pharmacies is waiving the £5.99 fee for its pregnancy testing kit between April 10 and May 7. Among other businesses promoting the millennium baby boom is Yorkshire Television, which will show a night of programmes called *Birth Race 2000* on Saturday night. A website called *Babyworld* is trying to recruit couples so that it can show a millennium birth live on the Internet.

The Family Planning Association is starting a campaign this week, entitled "A baby is a life, not just for the millennium." It comes after hospitals gave warnings that their standards of care would be reduced because of the demands of a new year baby boom.

Having a millennium baby is very romantic notion, but reality will be very different, a spokesman for the association said. "If you really want a child, why not give it a better chance in life by planning for it later in the year, when the system will not be dangerously overloaded?"

www.fpa.co.uk ITN millennium bar site, with links to Babyworld



Blaenavon's industrial landscape is dominated by the winding gear of Big Pit, a conserved coalmine that is open to visits from the public

Blaenavon: Taj Mahal of the Valleys

Valerie Elliott on unlikely world heritage site

A FORMER ironworking and coal mining area in South Wales is being put forward as a world heritage site. If successful, it would share the same international status as the Taj Mahal, the Great Wall of China and Venice.

The Blaenavon industrial landscape in Torfaen has been selected by Chris Smith, the Culture Secretary, to compete for the honour awarded by Unesco. The site is distinguished by four massive hillside furnaces — vestiges of its former industrial heyday — and Big Pit, a conserved mine now open to visitors. It has jumped ahead of the Lake District, the New Forest, Shakespeare's Stratford and the Royal Botanical Gardens at Kew, West London, in the list of British sites being considered by ministers.

Among landmarks already boasting the coveted status are Stonehenge and

Avebury, Blenheim Palace and Park, the Tower of London, the City of Bath, Ironbridge Gorge and Hadrian's Wall military zone. World heritage status is a huge boost to tourism.

Blaenavon, at the head of the South Wales Valleys, may seem an unlikely choice. But the Government was told by Unesco officials to steer clear of palaces, cathedrals and historic towns and to come up with places linked to industrial heritage or natural landscapes.

Blaenavon's industrial past dates from the late 16th century, when the area was crossed by a horse-drawn railway. The landscape also includes a stretch of the Brecknock and Abergavenny Canal and Britain's oldest exist-

ing railway and canal interchange warehouses, which date from 1810-20.

Mr Smith said last night that the site was of a type "generally under-represented on the current world heritage list". He accepted that people campaigning for other British sites would be disappointed, but said that he would put forward the Dorset and East Devon coast and the historic village of New Lanark for world heritage status to mark the millennium.

Mr Smith also has responsibility for choosing sites in British overseas territories and has picked the town of St George, Bermuda, to be submitted with Blaenavon this year.

The full list of sites drawn up by Mr

Smith for consideration for nomination by Britain for world heritage status in the next five to ten years is: Chatham naval base, Kent; the Cornish mining industry; Darwin's home and workplace; the Derwent Valley; Dorset and East Devon coast; Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew; the Lake District; Liverpool commercial centre and waterfront; Manchester and Salford; the Monkwearmouth/Jarrow monastic sites; the New Forest; the Paddington/Bristol railway; Saltire; Shakespeare's Stratford; the Wash and North Norfolk coast; the Cairngorms; the Flow Country; the Forth rail bridge; New Lanark; Pontcysyllte aqueduct, Wrexham; Mount Stewart, Co Down.

From the overseas territories he has chosen Anguilla, Fountain Cavern and Gibraltar Fortress.

Outlook for 2001 is floods, fires and record heat

By Nick NUTTALL
ENVIRONMENT CORRESPONDENT

RECORD temperatures are being forecast for the start of the next millennium because of global warming.

Scientists estimate that rising carbon-dioxide levels, aggravated by a sudden return of El Niño, will push temperatures in 2001 or 2002 beyond those of last year, the previous hottest.

Experts are saying that the high temperatures will increase the risk of natural disasters. Phil Jones, of the cli-

matic research unit at the University of East Anglia, an adviser to the Government on climate change, gave a warning yesterday of hurricanes in Mexico and parts of the South Pacific, and violent storms in the Eastern Pacific and places such as California, Peru and Ecuador. Severe floods, linked with warmer-than-average winter temperatures, could hit Britain and the rest of Europe.

He said the severity of the weather systems could be the most violent in modern times "because there will be

more energy in the system. There may also be extreme droughts in places such as Papua New Guinea, Indonesia and parts of Australia," said Professor Jones, whose unit works with the Meteorological Office's Hadley Centre to compile global temperature patterns.

Forest fires of the kind that recently destroyed more than four million hectares in northern Brazil, two million hectares in the Khabarovsk district of Russia and large areas of Indonesia may flare up. Professor Jones said:

"If nothing is done a lot of the forest fires in places such as Sumatra and Borneo are likely to recur, along with regional smogs."

There is also concern for corals, vital nurseries for fish and natural sea defences for low-lying islands such as the Maldives. Last year large numbers of reefs were killed by unusually high sea-surface temperatures.

The forecast is based on rising levels of greenhouse gases, temperature trends during the past 40 years, and mounting evidence that El Niño

is becoming more frequent and more severe. Professor Jones said it now seemed likely that the next El Niño will hit in 2001 or 2002, helping to make that year "probably the warmest for more than a millennium."

The warnings come as leading academics, environmentalists, politicians and churchmen have signed a declaration urging governments to agree a cut of 70 to 80 per cent in carbon emissions on 1990 levels.

Forecast, page 22

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New faces tipped to join Cabinet



Reid: Blairite in Prescott's team

JOHN REID and Paul Murphy have emerged as strong candidates to enter the Cabinet when Tony Blair makes his next reshuffle over the coming three months.

Dr Reid, currently Transport Minister, is a leading Blairite in John Prescott's predominantly old Labour Department of Environment, Transport and the Regions. Mr Murphy is given much credit in Whitehall for his strong performance as one of Mo Mowlam's deputies at the Northern Ireland Office. The two ministers could figure in what the Prime Minister intends to be a limited reconstruction after the Scottish and Welsh elections.

The overall size of the changes that the Prime Minister makes to the Government makes this summer could depend on discussions he is expected to have with Frank Dobson, the Health Secretary. According to government insiders, Mr Dobson and Dr Mowlam are Mr Blair's preferred choices as Labour candidates to become Mayor of London.

Mr Blair has left open the door for a leading business figure to come forward as the Labour nominee. But no plausible candidate from the business world has appeared and there is widespread expectation that Mr Blair will tell Mr Dobson that he wants him to become the capital's

Philip Webster reports on the reshuffle that is likely to follow Scots and Welsh elections

first elected mayor, a post that will be one of the most powerful in the country.

Mr Dobson is privately resistant to the idea, but many believe that he will, in the end, be persuaded. Dr Mowlam, a very popular figure, is also understood to be a choice highly favoured in Downing Street. But she is believed to be looking for a central role in government when her time in the Province ends.

Mr Blair believes that either of them would be far more popular with London voters than Ken Livingstone, the last leader of the Greater London Council, who is still struggling to become the Labour candidate amid signals that he will be kept

off the list that will go before the party's London members to decide the choice.

Mr Murphy is thought to be in line for the post of Welsh Secretary if Alun Michael becomes First Minister after the elections to the new assembly. Similarly, the post of Scottish Secretary will be vacant if Donald Dewar sees off the Scottish Nationalist challenge to become First Minister in Scotland.

After the elections the Scottish and Welsh Offices will be scaled down, with fewer ministerial posts. Peter Hain, one of the Junior Welsh Office ministers, is expected to be promoted, partly as reward for his central role in the campaign

to get Mr Michael chosen as the Labour candidate for First Minister, after Ron Davies stepped down.

Helen Liddell, one of Mr Dewar's deputies, who has been playing a leading role in the Scottish campaign, is in the running to be Scottish Secretary, but she may be edged out by Brian Wilson, currently a minister at Trade and Industry.

Mr Blair is widely expected to leave his Big Four ministers — Mr Prescott, Robin Cook, Jack Straw and Gordon Brown — in their jobs until the general election. With Stephen Byers having moved to the Department of Trade and Industry after Peter Mandelson's resignation and David Blunkett considered difficult to replace at Education and Employment, the scope for wide-scale changes is circumscribed.

Should other Cabinet vacancies occur, Tessa Jowell, the Blairite Health Minister, would be in line for promotion. Patricia Hewitt, the highly rated Economic Secretary to the Treasury, seems certain to be promoted soon.

Dr Reid is felt by senior ministers to have deserved Cabinet rank. Mr Blair might decide to keep him at Environment to balance Mr Prescott's more traditionalist team, but make him a second Cabinet minister within that department.



Murphy: one of Mowlam's deputies

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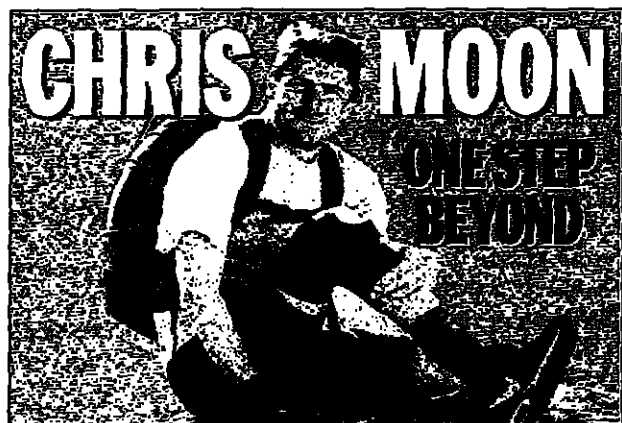
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CHRIS MOON: A STORY OF COURAGE

I stare; my lower leg has gone. I think I'm going to die

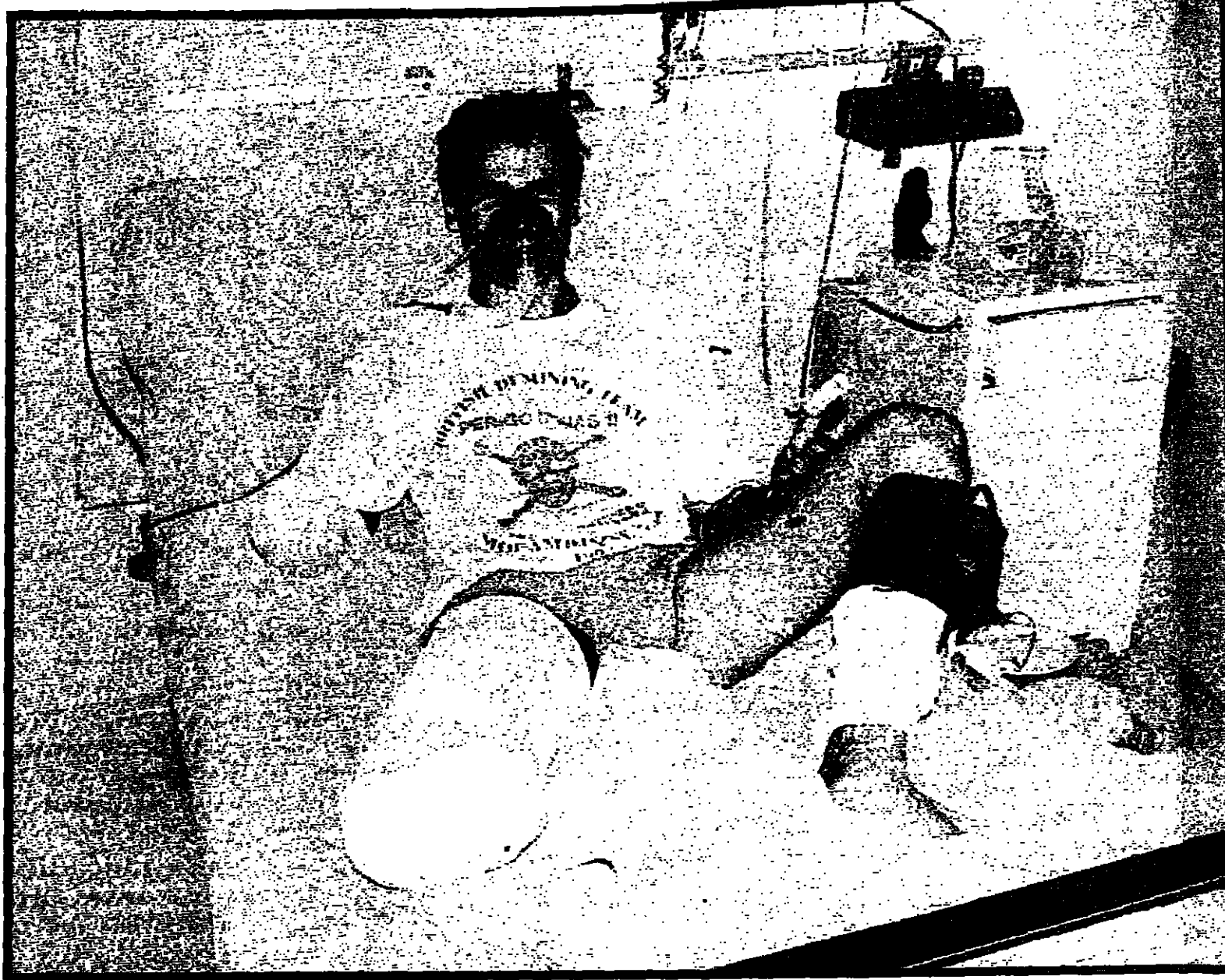


Former soldier **Chris Moon**, 36, lost an arm and a leg clearing a minefield in Africa but went on to run the marathon. In the first extract from his compelling story he relives the incident that changed his life

The date: March 7, 1995. The place: a remote minefield in northern Mozambique. The sun is high in the sky and it's hot. Most of the minefield has been cleared. Neatly painted white sticks starkly mark the safety lanes. The vegetation is cut as short as possible to allow metal detectors to sweep close to the ground. The mined sector is obvious because of the scrub, low bushes and long thick grass. I sweep the metal detector over the parched, red-brown earth, then prod gently and sift through the soil. About five metres in front of me a small whirlwind turns through the minefield. It's a twister. They're quite common in hot climates. As the small spiral of wind twists its demented circular jig, it lifts bits of dead grass and leaves.

I turn to go, then I feel it — cold. In the heat of the African day, how can I feel cold? A shiver runs down my spine and the hairs on the back of my neck rise. Suddenly I'm frightened. Ahead of me, at the bottom of the lane, something vile and evil is moving towards me. I have felt this before. I can only describe it as obscene, utter blackness. I must have had too much sun. I'm dehydrated. Be reasonable. I know I must not stay here. I am starting to feel sick. My guts ache. I turn quickly and start to walk back down the safety lane. I take three paces and hear the loudest bang I've ever heard. The noise of the explosion is ringing in my ears. Everything is calm. It's strange how the silence is so loud after an explosion. I'm lying on my chest. I feel fine. No pain. I raise my hand. It's bleeding. I can't move it. Cautiously I start to

raise myself. I know the body produces endorphins in time of traumatic injury. I won't have pain for a minute or so. It must have been a mine. I turn over carefully and sit up. My hand is mangled and bleeding like a squashed strawberry. I look down at my right leg. The air is sharp with the smell of the explosion and my burnt and blasted flesh. I stare. My lower leg has completely gone. The foot has vanished. There is just a finger of splintered yellow bone surrounded by ragged pink flesh. I am surprised that my bone is so yellow. I always thought it was white. Through the burning and stinging I fight to focus my mind. I'll be lucky to get out of this alive. I think I'm going to die. I will fight the pain, try not to moan. I will not lose control. I must send a casualty report to the back-up team on the



Chris Moon in hospital after the blast: "Ahead of me at the bottom of the lane something vile and evil was moving towards me. I had felt this before..."



Planning and mapping with colleagues in Cambodia, left. Undergoing demolition training in Mozambique, right.



someone's poured petrol down my gullet and set fire to it. I want to know where we're going. I lift my head and look ahead. There are trees and the grass is long. We're nearly there. I lie back and look at the sky again. The blue is getting more and more beautiful.

I measure time in breaths but I've lost count of the number of breaths. I am being lowered. I try to raise my head. I see the outline of a shiny yellow, black and white helicopter, incongruous among the African trees and long grass. It is silent, ready and waiting. How strange; it's as if they've been expecting me. The chopper door is open and the front left seat has been taken out. The stretcher bearers' pace slows and they lower their load. I prop myself up on my left elbow and look ahead. The pilot is standing in front of me.

"Don't worry, we'll have you out of here in no time," he looks at my injuries and I think he goes slightly pale. I can't imagine I look good. I lie back. My head isn't quite on the cushion. Kid hands gently lift my head and move the padding so my neck is no longer tilted back. The tail lifts off first, then we are airborne. The grass

road. It feels like ten minutes has passed since the blast, but I know it is hardly a second. I shout in a controlled voice. "Frank, I'm a casualty. I have been blown up walking down the safety lane. Lower right leg is blown off. Right hand is badly damaged. Get on the radio to the USAID helicopter. Only the two medics should come into the lane with the stretcher. Do you understand?" "Yes, sir," Frank shouts. I lie back on the shoddy clipped bush grass of the safe-

ty lane and I feel as if I'm burning. The right sleeve and leg of my thick cotton boiler suit are shredded to rags but it seems to have done its job of keeping flash burns to a minimum. I look at my forearm and can see the veins, which normally stick out strong and greeny-blue, have almost disappeared. I know I'm going into shock. My throat is consumed with a burning thirst. It is on fire. It is getting worse. Sleep beckons. I know I could just drift away and die.

I hear a shocked moan behind me. The medic looks at me with wide staring eyes. He puts the trauma pack down and stares in horror at the stump of my leg. I wonder what other injuries I have. I've been wearing body armour and eye protection. At least I can see, and I know I have no stomach injuries. I wonder if I've had my balls blown off. The thought is terrifying and I fight off a rising surge of panic. I thrust my hand between the popper but-

tons of my fly and pull up my boxer short elastic. I peer down and see blood around my groin. I gently put my hand down. I breathe deeply. I check the bits. They're bleeding slightly, but everything is still intact. Thank you, God! The medics have laid out the orange stretcher next to me. They lift me up gently and put me on the stretcher. I'm surprised they take so much care. I can't feel anything except the burning in my throat. It's like

Inspired to get back on your feet

Long after Douglas Bader shot down his last enemy aircraft in the Second World War, he is still serving his fellow citizens. Bader's battle to fly again after the loss of both legs continues to provide inspiration to thousands of limbless patients.

In the early days after the loss of a limb, none but the pathologically detached can hope to be free of some degree of depression, but the example of those like Bader or Chris Moon encourages amputees who are grieving and despondent and persuades them to concentrate on rehabilitation.

The objective after an amputation and the fitting of a prosthesis is to enable a patient to regain the skills required for everyday living. It would be fantastic to still be able to climb Mount Everest, but what is really needed is self-sufficiency and the preservation of pride — and this is achieved by learning to carry out such everyday tasks as washing, shaving, dressing, eating, using the lavatory and telephone and, of course, walking, even running, without too obvious a limp.

The degree of rehabilitation achieved by a patient after amputation and a limb prosthesis is not only dependent on determination, but varies according to age, weight and general health and vitality.

It is also related to the skill of the surgeon and the fitter, and the enthusiasm of the physician in charge of rehabilitation. The stump for below-knee amputation ideally should be about 15cm long, the skin flaps need to be cut so the scar is well-placed when the stump is fashioned and does

MEDICINE CHEST

DR THOMAS STUTTAFORD

not have to bear weight and rub, and the bone ends need to be protected by raucuses of the upper leg.

Dr Sellaiah Soori, a consultant physician in rehabilitation medicine at Queen Mary's University Hospital, Roehampton, said that below-knee amputations were the most successful of all amputations.

So good were the results that, for instance, the 100 metres record at the Olympics for the disabled was only a couple of seconds slower than that recorded for the standard games.

The prosthesis below the knee can be held in place by a suction socket alone, and a modern carbon-fibre ankle joint system allows the joint to be flexed or extended, the movement someone makes when they press the accelerator of a car up and down, or spontaneously turn in or out when walking, as when on rough ground.

The artificial limb can be made waterproof for swimming, or fitted with shock absorbers for the keen golfer. It can mimic normal movements so sensitively that bystanders will usually not even realise that the patient has an artificial limb.

Above-knee amputations pose greater problems. The knee is a complex joint, difficult to copy artificially — even the comfortable transmission of weight which

the stump has to bear presents many troubles. Despite that, above-knee prostheses have come a long way since the peg-leg of Long John Silver or even the tin legs of Douglas Bader, but some limp is inevitable.

Even patients who have lost their right hands may soon become adept with the left, and many are therefore reluctant to use a below-elbow prosthesis.

A recent survey has revealed that the majority of people with a below-elbow amputation don't use one.

The hand is an amazingly precise instrument and depends on very keen sensory perception which, unfortunately, no piece of medical engineering gadgetry can replace.

The hook has changed since Captain Hook's day but they still tend to be coarse, slow and heavy.

Good cosmetic hands are available and various devices which give a pincer movement, worked either mechanically or electrically, between the thumb and first two fingers, but more refined

working artificial hands are still only at the research stage. Dr Soori said: "After the loss of a limb, the primary objective is to find out all about just what the person's former life was like and then, through rehabilitation and with the aid of an artificial limb, to see that so far as possible they can be helped to meet their individual expectations."

"The function of the limb must not only be adequate in regard to their work, but also to their domestic life and hobbies."

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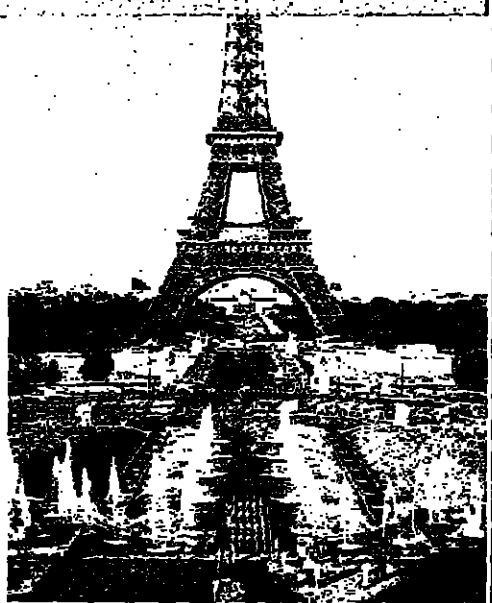
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حيدر بن الامير

CHRIS MOON: A STORY OF COURAGE

Some say I won't run again. I say I will

I have been in hospital for about ten days. I hope this will be the last amputation and that they have reached the last of the dirt that was blasted up into the leg, because there's not much left below the knee now.

I ask for the usual short back and sides, then go to great lengths to position myself exactly where they want me on the slab. As they prepare the injection, I thank God I am lucky enough to get such brilliant treatment.

When they have time, they take me out in the wheelchair and push me around outside the hospital so I can feel the sunshine and breathe fresh air. The hospital is a modern building. The front is like a well-built, marble-clad office block, the rest is more functional. It inspires confidence.

I know I don't look healthy. One of my young visitors had to rush off and throw up the other day. They all wanted to know what happened when I was blown up. If people ask me, I don't mind telling them. I suppose it's only natural that they are curious. Strangely enough, I hadn't started telling them the really gory bits when he puked.

I wonder how long it will be before I can walk again. Some people think I might be able to run again, though some say I won't. I say I will. Yes, I will.

The doctor and consultant examine the stump and knee. The consultant says: "Good news. The infection is under control and we think it's safe to close the wound. I have also spoken to physio and they are getting you some crutches. Within the next week or so you should be up and about."

Every day I try to get a little stronger and to do something I didn't do the day before. I'm still sleeping only a few hours at night. The rest of the time I feel as if I'm in limbo. I am aware of my surroundings and have no problem having a conversation, but I find reading and anything that requires me to concentrate difficult.

The physiotherapist arrives with an enormous package wrapped in brown paper. It feels like Christmas. Out come the crutches. She sets them to the correct height and I watch like an excited child. Carefully I put the stump of my arm on the rest. The thick bandage around my arm offers some protection. With her steadying my shoulders, I start to move cautiously around the room. We emerge into the corridor. I don't have any shoes. There is still



The hardest test: Chris prepares to run the London Marathon in 1996

a thick bandage around the flash burn on my ankle, so I probably wouldn't get a shoe on anyway. "Take small steps," she says. "You can't risk falling over yet."

I am forced to admit that it was harder than I thought it would be.

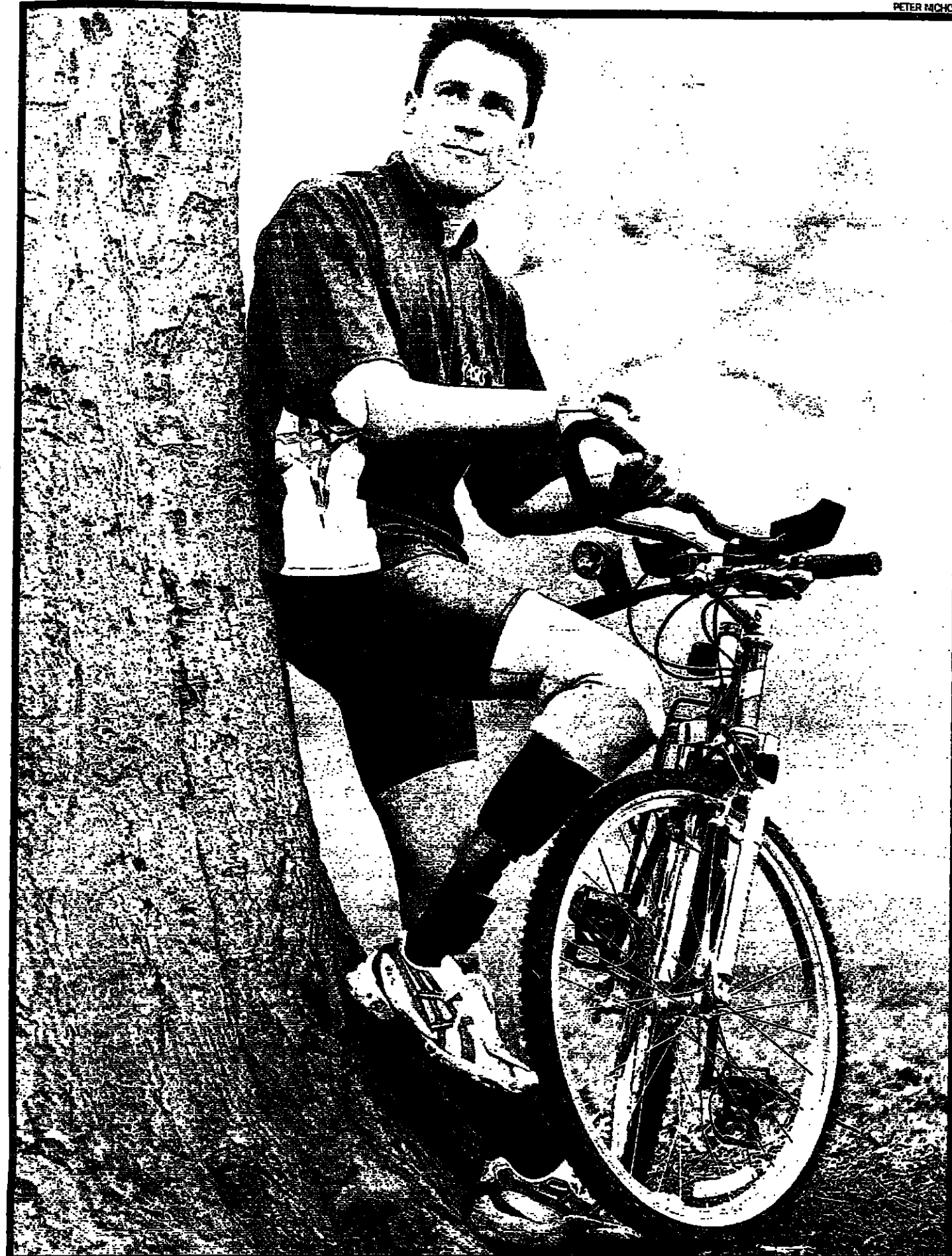
The physio sensibly takes the crutches away and hides them until I have had a few more supervised

sessions. Gradually we go farther and farther down the corridor and eventually I reach the hospital entrance.

As a child, when things were not going well, I used to thank God for the fact that I had two arms and two legs. Now I am even more grateful for the fact that at least I still have one of each.

TOMORROW

*Kidnapped in Cambodia:
'The Khmer Rouge are
running towards us waving
their weapons. We are
surrounded. I hope to God
nobody starts shooting'*



"As a child, when things were not going well, I thanked God I had two arms and two legs. Now I am grateful I still have one of each"

shimmers in the downdraft and we start rising above the trees. The noise is deafening. The medic is by my side and starts to open his orange bag. He gets out two drip lines and two clear plastic bags of Ringers solution. He unzips an inner pocket, removes a shiny metal hook and carefully loops it through the radio headset hook on the roof.

I look out of the window and watch the trees fly past beneath us. We are flying over the bush. We still have a long way to go. I force myself to lie still. I'm getting weaker and weaker. All I want to do is go to sleep and escape from this.

I turn my head back to the medic. He's put the needles in my elbow joints and I didn't even feel them. All I want to do is cry "Water. Water. Please give me water" but I can't speak. My throat is too dry and my voice doesn't work. I'm worried. In books and films people cry for water just before they die from traumatic injury.

The trees rush past the side windows, then I look up at the sky. I turn back as the medic turns the drip on. Wait. I don't think he's run them through. If he hasn't, the air from the lines will probably kill me. I can't afford to take the chance. I sit up and try to explain but when I speak, nothing happens. My voice isn't working. I point. He looks

at me sympathetically and pats my shoulder. He thinks I'm delirious, shocked out of my wits. He tries to lie me back down. I try to resist, then realise how weak I am.

I have no choice. I lie back. He reaches again for the switch. There's only one thing I can do. I'm fighting for my life. I sit up and lash out with my left hand. Then I pull the line from the inside of my right elbow with my left hand.

My right hand doesn't work so I bite the hard plastic end of the needle and pull my arm away. It comes out. I let go with my teeth and watch it drop on to my dirty, bloodstained overalls.

I have to put out the fire in my throat. Ringers solution is isotonic; the same concentration as blood. It's absorbed almost immediately through the gut wall. I have no stomach injuries, so I can drink. It's not standard medical procedure, but I feel like I'm dying from lack of fluid. I've never been closer to the edge of panic.

I hold my right arm awkwardly to the side and reach up with my left. The bag is soft and warm. I push it up and off the loop. Out of the corner of my eye I see the pilot turn his head, wondering what's going

on. I'm sorry I can't explain. My mind races. I didn't know I could think this fast. The inferno in my throat is consuming me. I think my head is about to explode.

I am moving my left hand towards my mouth. I watch the liquid in the clear plastic get closer. It is the elixir of life. I bite through the plastic and the warm liquid floods into my mouth. I tip my head back and gulp greedily. Relief floods through me. It's better than diving into a cool, blue pool on a scorching day.

We touch down. Rupert watches and waits. The engine becomes quiet and the rotors stop. He bends down, leans forward and runs under the rotors to the door. He opens it and says: "Don't worry mate, we'll soon be sitting down having a beer and a chat somewhere cool." I'm lucky he's switched on. I'm doubly fortunate because he's our best medic.

As they lift me out I feel weak and tired, but I have to know. "Do you think I'm going to die?"

"No. You just won't be quite as pretty as you used to be."

I've never been called pretty before and it's not high on my list of priorities, so that's all right.

The hospital is the enormous single-storey concrete building near by. They put me on a battered trolley and wheel me in. They cut off my clothes. I hear the scissors. They examine the wounds and search for other injuries that are not immediately apparent. They keep talking but I can't hear what people are saying. All these things seem to be happening around me.

Rupert goes to check aircraft availability. The nurse says: "We will stabilise you and fly you out as soon as we can." A few minutes later some-

one says: "Don't worry, you'll be fine. Now we're giving you a general anaesthetic. You won't feel any more pain. You will be OK, don't worry." That's what I used to say to sick animals as I stroked them while the vet was putting them down.

I see a small hypodermic, held in an anonymous surgical glove, approaching my forearm. I don't feel the injection. The smell of disinfectant fills my nostrils. I'm tired, more tired than I thought.

"Mr Moon," a man's voice. "Mr Moon, can you hear me?"

It must be the doctor. I try to speak but only manage to groan. My eyes are too heavy to open.

I force a shaky reply. "Yes." "You're in hospital in South Africa, Mr Moon. You were injured in an explosion. Do you remember?"

"Yes. I had my lower right leg blown off."

"That's right. I'm the surgeon looking after you and I have to tell you that I have just amputated your right hand four inches above the wrist. There was a remote chance we could have saved it but it would probably never have functioned. Reconstruction surgery would have taken more than two years and it was likely that it would then have had to be amputated anyway."

I am curiously relieved. He's told the truth straight away and I still have a life. I want to get out of here as soon as I can and get back to work. I don't want to spend the next two years in limbo. It's far better to get rid of it now than mess around. I've heard people get phantom pain after an amputation. That's why my hand hurts. I say: "Thank you. I want to get back to work as soon as I can."

● Extracted from *One Step Beyond* by Chris Moon, published by Macmillan, £16.99. Times readers can buy it for £14.99 by calling The Times Bookshop, 0990 134 459.

It's like
someone's
poured
petrol
down my
gullet

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ARTS

Hot from Hollywood: America's
Easter weekend blockbuster is
reviewed by Giles Whittell.

Arts, Pages 32-34

Blair's line of least resistance

The punchline is missing in this improvised Balkan war

History repeats itself. The first time as tragedy, and now as improvisational comedy. The unfolding humanitarian disaster in Kosovo has, certainly, had the tragic quality of inevitability. It would not have required Themistoclean foresight to recognise that Slobodan Milosevic would respond to bombing with an intensification of his ethnic cleansing. But if the butcher of the Balkans has played true to stereotype there has been no sense that the ditherer of Downing Street has been sucking to any script. It seems uncomfortably as though Tony Blair has been making it up as he goes along.

Improvisation is, of course, an invaluable part of the repertoire of the performer. And in *Whose Line Is It Anyway?*, Channel Four succeeded in building an appreciative audience for improv. At the ring of Clive Anderson's buzzer, the performers would act out a cocktail party scene as though it had been directed by Ingmar Bergman, then buzz John Ford, and then buzz Quentin Tarantino.

Now, at the drop of a Nato bomb, Tony Blair acts out the part of war leader in the style of Gladstone, then boom Thatcher, and then boom Churchill. Although it seems, at the moment, as though he is closer to being the Churchill of Gallipoli rather than D-Day.



Michael Gove

When Nato started its assault on Serbia we were assured that this was a humanitarian effort and Slobodan would buckle in days. Subsequently we were told that we were fighting in the national interest to secure regional stability, and we had better prepare for a long haul. After this weekend, we are no longer restricting ourselves to an intervention based on Gladstonian compassion, let alone a Thatcherite fight for our national interest. "This is now," Mr Blair informed readers of *The Sun* "a battle between good and evil." Along the corridors of Downing Street echo the words of Churchill, "upon this battle depends the survival of Christian civilisation".

Yet in this Manichean struggle, not just a dictatorship and an alliance of democracies, but between "democracy and dictatorship" itself, as the Prime Minister argued in *The Sunday Telegraph*, our leaders are prepared to sacrifice everything but the good opinion of the focus groups. Mr Blair is fighting his war on two fronts, an air offensive in the Balkans and a holding operation with Middle England. How else to explain the refusal to consider any commitment of ground troops, and the insistence that everything be done to help the refugees except offer them proper refuge?

The polls may suggest that there is support for intervention on the ground. But surveys also show that there is deep wariness about the use of British soldiers dying to keep Pec ethnically Albanian. Mr Blair seems to regard the headline support for committing ground troops as he did the superficial support in previous electoral campaigns for

tax rises. Once public attitudes are properly explored, the idealism evaporates. And not just among the electorate. The improvisational Prime Minister, who has moulded his act to the audience, dares not educate the public in the hard truths of war. Nor does he challenge the limits of our compassion. So, instead of providing a home for huddled masses we have a groan, and muddled thinking.

We are asked to believe that air power alone will cause Milosevic to wobble. We are asked to accept that, in Mr Blair's own words, Nato will "drive... the Serbian army from Kosovo" without its forces ever setting foot in the province. And we are invited to collude in the belief that the Kosovans will happily return to their devastated homeland once we have declared it a "safe haven".

This is not so much improvisation, as dangerous invention, no longer comedy but folly to which the hollowest laugh cannot do justice. Short of Hiroshima, and I trust we are a long way short of that, no conflict has been concluded with aerial bombardment. Even then, the Japan which sued for peace had seen its armies crushed on the ground.

No matter how successful this air offensive is, and we must pray for its success, can it really not be augmented by the threat of action on the ground? Would not

the very act of building up our forces in Macedonia act as a more powerful signal of our seriousness than the bombardment of Fleet Street with signed philippics from No 10? And would we not be better able to persuade Kosovans to return to their homeland if we were prepared to deploy not just bombers but troops to secure its integrity? Ask the Kurds how effective are their safe havens secured from the air and the graves give their own mute answer.

But the commitment of ground troops, what one might call, without apology to Margaret Thatcher, the resolute approach, requires something new from our current leaders. It is something they seem incapable of giving — a lead. We have a Prime Minister who can feel our pain, but not steel us to endure it. Having abandoned the rhetoric of sacrifice somewhere on the road from John Smith's grave, Mr Blair has to improvise a new style of political leadership. Our strung-out Premier will not cease from mental fight, but he lets the sword sleep in his hand.

Without a willingness to drive the Serbian army out at gunpoint we face, at best, the prospect not of a liberated Kosovo, but a partitioned one. If, after he has finished his ethnic cleansing, Milosevic chooses, himself, to improvise and offer us a new peace deal with a carved-up Kosovo, what evidence is there that Nato will stand firm when the world looks at this new division, and asks whose line it is anyway, what will our ever-inventive Prime Minister say then?

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Speech impediments

The ancient myth of Babel lives on in the killing fields of Kosovo

They think they have dug up the Tower of Babel. What could be more spookily appropriate to this Easter? The word is that Michael Saunders, a classicist, concludes from new Nasa photographs and reinterpreted biblical texts that the legendary tower was not in Mesopotamia as previously assumed, but by the Black Sea.

If so, I hope it becomes a place of penitential pilgrimage, because nothing could be more apt as we squabble into a new century. In my school the Babel story was not much dwelt upon in RE — possibly because the Modern Languages department did not want us noticing that its moral seems to be that foreign languages are a punishment sent by God. So I looked it up over Easter.

It is one of those capricious, unpalatable incidents in Genesis which brings to mind the story told in the trade about a biographer of Evelyn Waugh. Fresh from that task, the hardy writer was commissioned to work on a children's Bible: it is reported that at one point she muttered: "I thought there was nobody worse than Waugh, but the God of the Old Testament runs him pretty close." Certainly His punishments often took the form of curmudgeonly frustration of human initiative.

The story tells of the days when "The whole earth was of one language and one speech". Wanderers arriving at the plain of Shinar decided to build a tower whose top might reach to Heaven. God, disliking this arrogance, came down to "confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech". So the confused new tribes scattered, each talking their own language and regarding the utterances of everyone else as so much gibberish. Think of it: proto-Serbian, early Croat, seeds of Albanian, Gujarati, Hindi, Russian, Hutu, Tutsi, English, Welsh — scattering across the world, to grow into cultures and loyalties which would set the sons and daughters of Adam at one another's throats for ten thousand years. The correct theological response is that mankind deserved it; nonetheless the words "dirty trick" spring to mind. Like all the best myths, Babel dramatises the unappealing aspect of ourselves, and expresses the eternal bafflement at the failure of the human race to behave with sense or even real self-interest. The early chapters of Genesis emphasise unity: the careful and much-parodied lineage tracing every tribe back

to Adam. The moment of Babel — told with tantalising brevity — turns a close society with a well-organised building project into a disorganised, squabbling rabble who give up the job and scatter to different territories because they literally can't get any sense out of one another. The myth answers the question "Why are we like this?" with the usual answer: that we separated ourselves from the will of God.

But you do not need to believe in God to feel the frustration: why are we like this? For centuries humane philosophers have bewailed our capacity for wasting effort on conflict when a fragment of the cost could have funded prosperous co-operation. Very few wars are actually fought for survival, and united societies have flourished under extreme privation. War sets progress back: in the Yugoslav context this is illustrated by a history of the Yugo car, a Tito export whose parts came from every corner of the federation, with Serb steel rolling on Bosnian wheels.

Looking at the present set of international crises it is unbearably frustrating to contemplate just how much could have been done for the countries bordering Serbia with the money currently exploding over Belgrade at five million dollars a bang; or to consider what the Balkan groups themselves could have achieved in peace. Meanwhile, better not even to think how many wells could be dug and farms founded by the muck currently wasted by the roaming killers of the interahamwe in central Africa, or how much more desert might have flourished if Arabs and Israelis lived in trust, or what Northern Ireland could become if its people would only let it.

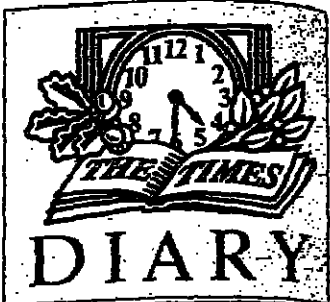
These are hopelessly naive reflections. We all know the answer: people aren't like that. People side with their own, and define their own in rigid ways. The Russians side with the Serbs because they are "theirs". The Serbs think everyone is against them, and considering what happened to them in Croatia, they are not entirely deluded. Even our own, supposedly race-blind Nato politics are visibly tainted with the desire to back people who look like us. We are more active over human rights in Kosovo than in Algeria, or China, or Burma; the justification of physical proximity does not stand up. If it were possible to do a controlled experiment I suspect that the Anglo-Saxon and Northern European leaders — and their electors — would always find excuses to help white victims before black, and that among the white victims they would prefer those who use the Roman alphabet to those who write Cyrillic or Arabic script. Remember the run-up to the Falklands war, and that flood of emotive journalism about the British ethos of the islands, and the outrage of having foreign orders barked there?

These instincts will always be with us, underlying everything that we do. The honest thing is to confront them frankly, and recognise unhelpful impulses. This applies as much to racism as to other conflicts. The other day a newspaper reported that a group of scientists interpret hostility to racially-mixed marriages in terms of Stone Age survival mechanisms. At a primitive level, it was biologically inadvisable to have a white skin in hot southern climates, because you need melanin for protection, and equally dangerous to be black in the grey north because white skins capture more vitamins from sunlight. Hence, a biological instinct not to mate, for fear of producing young with less capacity to survive.



Libby Purves

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Lost at sea?

THE alleged disappearance of the ringleaders of a mutiny aboard a destroyer captured by Lord Mountbatten during the Second World War is to be investigated by the Ministry of Defence. It is to launch the inquiry because veterans are demanding to know about the crewmen's fate.

In 1941, HMS *Jackal* was requested to help in the defence of Plymouth by employing its anti-aircraft guns against incoming German planes. As the ship fired off every shell and bullet on board, its crewmen, many of whom were from Plymouth, watched the city's destruction.

Once the action was over, the seamen asked to go ashore to see how their families had fared. Mountbatten (below), however, turned down their request and ordered the ship out to sea.

In protest, the ratings slammed the watertight doors and effectively went on strike. Mountbatten relented later that day, but when the ship arrived in Gibraltar a few weeks later, the ringleaders were flown home by the military and never seen again by their ship mates.



A SERBIAN protester in Parliament Square with a placard urged Robin Cook over the weekend to "make love not war".

■ JACK STRAW'S campaign against institutional racism does not extend to Labour itself. Just as the Macpherson report into the Stephen Lawrence murder showed that the Race Relations Act did not apply to the police, so two industrial tribunals against the party have highlighted that it also is excluded from the legislation.

Raghib Ahsan, a former Birmingham councillor, has followed Neelam Bakshi, a counterpart in Scotland, in alleging that the party has acted in a racially discriminatory fashion towards them. They are both backed by the Commission for Racial Equality.

Ken Livingstone says Labour is actively fighting the cases by exploiting its exemption from the Act. "Why is the Labour leadership," he asks, "refusing to accept that the Act should apply to the Labour Party itself?"

BELGIUM this month joined Egypt and Jamaica as countries where the Foreign Office advises British tourists to take care.

■ LIKE a Victorian covering up the legs of a piano, one of Britain's latest Oscar winners has concealed the nudity of his award. Stephen Warbeck, who received the prized statue in Hollywood for composing the music for *Shakespeare in Love*, has been clothing the trophy in Barbie doll clothes borrowed from his children. "I looked at the Oscar and thought, I don't like the look of this thing much," he says. "He's been wearing a purple dress for some of his time in Britain."



MADEIRAINE ALBRIGHT'S latest strategy for winning the war in the Balkans: a new hairdo. In very public view, the Secretary of State yesterday sat under the dryer at Hair Design in Georgetown, surrounded by a posse of Secret Service agents.

■ MINIMALISM has failed to add value to Peter Mandelson's home. The estate agency board has been standing outside the former Trade Secretary's house in Northumberland Place for two and a half months. A similar but more homely property down the road and on the market for an equivalent period has just been snapped up.

DURING its latest stock-taking, the London Dungeon has discovered that it is missing a replica skull, chastity belt and severed head of King Charles I.

EDWARD WELSH

'It may seem inclusive, but the next royal wedding risks disastrous public relations, by mixing the public uncomfortably with the relations'

Helen Rumbelow

Love may grow from intimacy, but it is in the nature of wedding vows that they must be before an audience. As Dr Johnson observed of executions, there's no point if they're not public. But even for the least private of this year's weddings, the marriage of Prince Edward and Sophie Rhys-Jones, there can be such a thing as too public an avowal.

Those planning this royal wedding in the expectation that it will, unlike others, actually have a fairytale ending would do better to go back to the traditional stories than substitute them with publicity techniques learnt from *Hello!* Prince Charming naturally invited everyone in all the land to cheer the good match he made in Cinderella, but he invented strict quantity controls to keep the actual ceremony to his bride and close family. Instead, Prince Edward and

Sophie Rhys-Jones have invited 500 of their closest friends, and then decided to let the public scramble in an unseemly draw for the final 2,000 places inside Windsor Castle.

It may seem inclusive, but the next royal wedding risks disastrous public relations, by mixing the public uncomfortably with the relations. And even before the relations object, the public will. The national tradition, duty even, of using queues as a means of fairly distributing anything from stamps to a glance at celebrity has been wiped out with one stroke of Sophie's wand. Gone is the loyal fan, a man in a Union Jack hat, with warm sandwiches and cold sleeping-bag. In his place appears a new and increasingly common kind of guest, with the glazed and acquisitive face of someone entered in a prize draw. They will be familiar figures to one of the

couple's first invitees, Chris Tarrant from *Who Wants To Be A Millionaire?* It is a decision revealing of a modern Britain, in which lottery culture has overtaken fairness and romance. Like the lottery, those who win a place at the wedding can expect the envy of those they leave behind and the condescension of the old money with whom they aspire to rub shoulders.

For those guests who are there by the lottery of noble birth can hardly be expected to savour sharing their celebration with those who won a lucky ticket. Hanging themselves on burning would appear more attractive than sitting in an enclosure with 2,000 subscribers to *Majesty* magazine sweating patriotically into their flasks of hot tea.

The future Princess delayed

and delayed her engagement. And in this confused People's Wedding we can, perhaps, see why. It was not because of any wavering doubts about the manly Prince Edward and his passion for real tennis, but because she did not know in which of her rivals' footsteps to follow.

First there was the People's Princess, Diana's spectacularly camp taffeta-fest Pearly queens and gay men led the throngs adoring her from London streets, but respected that the marriage was a private affair only to be viewed on tea towels and ceremonial tumbrels after the event. Then came the Paparazzi Princess, the stately Spice Girl Mel B. She commanded not only that all her guests wear white, but at least £350,000

for the exclusive photographs. And in reaction to the above came the Public's Princess, an adorably down-home affair from Kate Winslet, the actress who tipped off only a few photographers to come to her local and watch her splatter cheap beer down her ridiculously expensive couture gown. The public relations girl watched these successes and wished to herself that she could have all three. How quickly she had forgotten the lesson she had learnt from her engagement with Edward: be careful what you wish for.

What results is a mixture of all these modern myths. She attempts to put a bouncer on the portcullis of the castle; rejecting most but allowing a few in from the crowd. But you cannot have your wedding cake and eat it. Issuing some golden tickets to the public and leaving the rest clamouring at the gate will cause more

anger than if no public tickets had been issued at all. Although Ms Rhys-Jones is a publicity maven she has yet to realise the fastest way to turn the public away from the royals is to allow them to feel they have a right to get close, and then snatch the dream from all but a random few.

The magic secret of enduring as a modern royal must be to remain exclusive. No "People's Weddings", no inner pens for the lucky few, no prize draws, no one to breathe down the back of a betrothed's neck as vows are said, no blurring of fans and friends. Then they will fulfil the fairytale monarchy of real populist dreams.

Once the thin end of this wedge prises open the chapel door, then what next? The birth of the first fruit of their union screened on *Live and Kicking*?

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Yours faithfully,
ANTHONY P. MORAN.
37 Monckton Road,
Gosport, Hampshire PO12 2BG.
April 5.

OBITUARIES

AILEEN PLUNKET

Aileen Plunket, Irish hostess, died on March 31 aged 94. She was born on May 16, 1904.

The eldest of the three Guinness sisters, Aileen Plunket became a legendary hostess in Ireland. She was the elder sister of Maureen, Marchioness of Dufferin and Ava, and of Conagh, Lady Oranmore and Browne. For many years "Mrs P" (as some friends called her) lived and entertained at her lovely residence, Luttrellstown, in Co Dublin. She was no more a stranger to the other Guinnesses, and was noted for having cupboards full of shoes to rival those of her friend the Duchess of Windsor — or even Mrs Imelda Marcos. Nor did she hesitate to fly to Paris from Dublin or London to have her hair done by the legendary hairdresser Monsieur Alexandre in his salon at the Rond Point des Champs Elysees.

At a party in the 1920s Sir Sacheverell Sitwell complained to Stephen Tennant: "There are too many Guinnesses in the room looking round angrily." Maureen, Conagh, Maureen, and Conagh, Tanis and many of the others predeceased her, but Aileen lived on, latterly a tiny figure in black, with a black velvet headband, suffering from osteoporosis.

Aileen Sibell Mary Guinness was the eldest daughter of Ernest Guinness, and a grand-daughter of the 1st Earl of Iveagh. She was perhaps the grandest of his three daughters. Maureen was funnier and naughtier, and Conagh slightly timid, veering more towards Southern Ireland's unpredictable literary society.

The film director John Huston wrote of them: "The sisters are all witches, lovely ones to be sure, but witches nonetheless. They are all transparent-skinned, with pale hair and light blue eyes. You can very nearly see through them. They are quite capable of changing swinish folk into real swine before your very eyes, and turning them back again without their even knowing it. Or putting the wrong words into

the mouths of pretentious persons, so that everyone, including the victims, is appalled at the nonsense they talk."

Aileen's father, Ernest Guinness, ran the family brewery and she was brought up in Southern Ireland until her father became concerned about Sinn Féin and sent her to school in England. She came out in London and was photographed by Cecil Beaton.

In 1927 she married her first husband, the Hon Brinsley Plunket, younger son of the 5th Lord Plunket. They had two daughters, the younger of whom, Doon, married the Queen's first cousin, 5th Earl Granville. During the Second World War Brinsley Plunket served as a flight lieutenant in the RAF Volunteer Reserve. He and Aileen divorced in 1940, and the following November he was killed on active service.

Partly out of loneliness she made an unfortunate second choice of husband in 1956, in Valerian Snux-Rybar, a designer born in Yugoslavia who began life as a trainee at the New York store Lord & Taylor, and went on to work for Elizabeth Arden as a window dresser. Later he achieved his own fame, creating opulent rooms and dressing extravagant parties. He designed the lobby of the Plaza Athénée Hotel in New York. He was described as the world's most expensive decorator. His wife confessed that she certainly found him an expensive mistake, but she remained on friendly terms with him even after their divorce in 1965. Nevertheless, she reverted to the Plunket name. Snux-Rybar died in 1990 aged 71.

On her first marriage, Aileen's father had given her Luttrellstown Castle, at Clonsilla, Co Dublin, not far from Phoenix Park. It was a large, crinellated castle, set in a 570-acre park entirely surrounded by a wall, which enclosed a large lake and stream (with a many-arched bridge), a sham ruin, a Doric temple and much beautiful parkland. The castle itself was rebuilt in the early 18th century for Luke White, the MP for Leitrim. Plunket brought palatial elegance. She replaced the 19th-century Tudor banqueting hall with a dining room in



Aileen, the eldest of the Guinness sisters, filled her castle with treasures and guests

18th-century style, adorned with birds, swags and foliage of stucco on the walls. The ceiling was painted by de Wit.

Her designer, Felix Harbord — sometimes nicknamed "Hardboard", or even "Cardboard" — created an Adamesque drawing-room with grisaille paintings by Peter de Gree. The staircase hall was given a ceiling painted by Thornhill. Aileen filled the castle with treasures, beautiful pictures, tapestries, carpets

and furniture. (Some years later she sued Harbord for selling some paintings which she insisted she had only wanted valued. She won the case.) While her sister Maureen collected owls in every form, Aileen collected frogs in china, crystal and various fabrics. Inevitably, Luttrellstown sported a cushion inscribed: "Before you meet a handsome prince, you have to kiss a lot of toads."

Luttrellstown was one of

Southern Ireland's finest properties, and there she entertained generously for more than half a century, often in a most unconventional way. She loved fancy dress and swimming parties. She gave a drag party, a "come unrecognisable" party (at which she failed to spot her own daughter), a floor party (at which everyone sat and ate on the floor) and, in the 1960s — impressed by the beaded hippies of California — she

imported a black American dance teacher to teach her guests to do the twist.

She was at times an exacting hostess, hating her guests to leave, and was known to pounce on those sneaking out at 4am to guide them back into the room. More formally, the Irish Government prevailed on her to help to entertain official visitors, as Luttrellstown had the necessary splendour and was conveniently situated.

Eventually, in 1983, she found the castle too big and was prevailed upon to sell it. Christie's arranged a memorably sad sale of the contents, marking the end of a particular era of Irish life. The star lot in the three-day sale was a royal armchair from the Palace of Fontainebleau, made for Louis XV by Joubert and Marchand, which fetched £64,000. The castle itself was sold to a private buyer, who also purchased some of the contents.

Plunket was a close friend of the Duchess of Windsor, and was celebrated for once appearing at a party in the 1960s dressed in a highly conspicuous black-and-white striped dress by Givenchy identical to the one being worn by the Duchess. The two ladies were photographed together. Plunket attended the Duchess's funeral in 1986 with her hair specially coiffed into her black hat.

Although a Guinness, she often pleaded poverty, and though there were many servants at Luttrellstown, it was said that they were scarcely paid. Bills were likewise neglected. But she was unpredictable. Shortly after listening to a dissertation about her poverty, one of her guests was surprised to see her in Paris, where she had flown from Dublin to have her hair done. On another occasion she took her daughter out to lunch to beg for money. When it was given, she promptly spent it all on frivolous luxuries at Asprey and elsewhere.

Latterly she lived in London and in a house near Bishop's Stortford in Hertfordshire. Although immensely frail she still appeared at the occasional party, especially if royalty was present. She is survived by her younger daughter.

SID GREEN

Sidney Green, comedy writer, died on March 15 aged 71. He was born on January 24, 1928.



SID GREEN was half of one of the most successful comedy-writing duos of the 1960s. With his partner Dick Hills, he wrote material for such popular performers of the day as Sid James, Frankie Howerd, Bette Forsyth and Bob Monkhouse. However, their most successful venture was an eight-year collaboration with Morecambe and Wise, whom their scripts propelled to national stardom.

The first Morecambe and Wise show had been poorly received, but Hills and Green helped to rescue their flagging act. By 1963 Eric and Ernie were winning awards, and in 1968 they gained a contract with BBC television, such was the degree of their success.

Sidney Charles Green was born in Becontree, Essex, and educated at Haberdashers' Aske's School at Elstree, Hertfordshire, where he met Dick Hills. After a period in the armed forces — where they were both officers, Hills in the Navy, Green in the Army — the two met at an old boys' rugby match, by which time both were teachers. They decided to turn their hand to comedy scripts, beginning by writing a pantomime for the old boys' rugby club.

It was after this that the pair decided to write comedy for a living. They struggled at first, until the Cockney comedian Dave King took them under his wing as one of his regular scriptwriters in the 1950s.

Green and Hills first met Eric Morecambe and Ernie Wise in 1960 on *The Alma Cogan Show*, where they were appearing as guest stars. The four immediately liked each other, and when Associated Television offered Morecambe and Wise their own show, Eric insisted that Green and Hills join them.

Besides writing, Green and Hills often appeared on camera. Industrial action by the actors' union Equity meant that the pair appeared repeatedly as extras on the early Morecambe and Wise shows. Later they starred in their own television programmes, *That Show* and *Those Two Fellers*.

by which time they were the highest paid comedy writers in the business.

They had their disappointments too. Green's bizarre comedy of 1960, *The Strange World of Gurney Slade*, was badly received, as were the three films Green and Hills wrote for Morecambe and Wise: without an audience to play to, Eric and Ernie looked uncomfortable and unfunny.

Soon after Morecambe and Wise secured their BBC deal, Eric suffered a severe heart attack, which kept the programme off the air for ten months. When it resumed, Green and Hills had moved on to ATV and two years later they left for America. Hills returned to Britain in 1974, leaving Green, who went on to join the scriptwriters of *The Johnny Carson Show*. Dick Hills died in 1996.

In 1977 Green devised a romantic comedy about a mixed-race love affair, but no American television network was brave enough to accept it. However, it was snapped up by the controller of London Weekend Television, Michael Grade, and shown as *Mixed Blessing*.

Green returned to Britain soon afterwards, and worked with the latest batch of mainstream comedians, such as Cannon and Ball, Freddy Starr, Michael Barrymore and the Kranksies, although by then old-fashioned variety comedy seemed to be on its last legs. Green retired to Frinton-on-Sea, where he enjoyed a brief second career as an after-dinner speaker.

Following a heart attack, Sid Green underwent a triple bypass in 1984. He is survived by his wife, Margaret, and their three daughters.

ADMIRAL SIR WILLIAM PILLAR

Admiral Sir William Pillar, GBE, KCB, Chief of Fleet Support, 1979-81, died on March 18 aged 75. He was born on February 24, 1924.

IN RECOGNITION of his achievements as a naval engineer and because of the great affection in which he was held, Bill Pillar's friends recently dubbed him to have his portrait painted. The picture, by Theo Ramos, was presented to the naval engineering school *HMS Sultan* at Gosport just a fortnight before Pillar's death, in a ceremony much enhanced by his witty and touching speech, delivered as usual without notes but on this occasion from a wheelchair.

Only the second engineer to achieve the rank of full admiral, Bill Pillar entered the Navy in 1942 from Blundell's School and took an engineering degree at the Royal Naval Engineering College at Manadon near Plymouth. Subsequent appointments included sea duty in the aircraft carrier *Illustrious*, the dispatch vessel *Alert* in the Far East and the destroyer *Corunna*.

His ability to lead and motivate people was well respected. In one post in Gibraltar, he found himself on the other side of the table from that formidable trade unionist Joe Bassano — later Chief Minister of Gibraltar — who remembers Pillar for his grasp of the strategic utility of Gibraltar dockyard and his appreciation of the loyalty of the workforce. "We had very tough negotiations, but at one minute to five we would become friends again and go down to the pub."

Pillar's most professionally enjoyable seagoing tour was as chief engineer of the cruiser *Tiger*, which visited South America in 1964-65. This was followed by a relaxed appointment on the staff of the Commander-in-Chief South Africa and South American station, based at Cape Town.

His inspirational talents were never put to better use than as captain of the Royal Naval Engineering College, Manadon, where he made it his business to know, understand and guide every one of the young students. He was also able to indulge his passion for sailing. Convinced of the character-building effect of offshore yachting, he would often accompany crews of students, but never as skipper and always taking his turn at the menial tasks.

He and his family had a particular love of Scotland from his three tours there, including Port Admiral Rosyth in 1976. From 1977 to 1981, as Assistant and subsequently Chief of Fleet Support, Pillar was involved in the often painful management of decline under the severe budgetary pressures of the period. Particu-



larly distressing for him was the closure of the Chatham and Gibraltar dockyards — at Chatham, in the absence of a minister, he took it upon himself to break the news — and the reductions in the Royal Fleet Auxiliaries, the Navy's tankers and store ships. Slightly older than many members of the Admiralty Board, he was in some sense a father confessor, advising, for example, against resignations as a reaction to the damaging 1981 Defence Review.

In 1982 Pillar became the first naval engineer to be appointed Commandant of the Royal College of Defence Studies, where he was much admired for his educated commentaries when introducing internationally celebrated visiting speakers. From 1985 to 1990 he was Lieutenant-Governor of Jersey, the constitutional link between the Sovereign and the States, or parliament, of the island. With enthusiasm and a characteristic absence of pretension, he supported all aspects of Jersey life and conducted the representational aspects of the role with style.

Generous with his time in the pursuit of good causes, he was valued for his pragmatic wisdom as president of the Forces' Help Society and Lord Roberts Workshops as well as for his work for the RNVY Youth Sail Training Trust and the training brig *Royalist*. For twenty years he was a Commodore and Life Vice-Commodore of the Royal Naval Sailing Association.

He was appointed KCB in 1980 and GBE in 1983. Despite these and other honours, he preserved an attractive modesty, remaining at heart a practical engineer whose recreations were always "rough gardening and fixing things".

He is survived by his wife, Ursula, whom he married in 1946 and by their three sons and daughter.

ERICA O'DONNELL

Erica O'Donnell, MBE, founder of the Study Centre for the History of the Fine and Decorative Arts, died on March 12 aged 79. She was born in Dublin on March 11, 1920.

WHEN Erica O'Donnell opened the Study Centre for the History of the Fine and Decorative Arts at the Victoria and Albert Museum in 1964, it was unique in offering a year's diploma course in which the history of furniture, ceramics, textiles and metalwork received equal treatment with architecture, painting and sculpture. Its success was attested by the number of applicants, who for years far outnumbered available places, and by the number of decorative art courses that sprang up elsewhere. Alumni of the course now include the directors and curators of national museums, art historians throughout the English-speaking world and hundreds of lay enthusiasts.

Erica O'Donnell was the only child of Major-General Eric O'Donnell. She was educated at St Mary's Asot, and tutored in Paris and Salzburg. At the age of 18 she entered the Courtauld Institute to study the history of art, but with the outbreak of war she took a position with M15, which guaranteed an interesting wartime career. After that she moved to the BBC Foreign Service, then to the Special Operations Executive, where she became an Intelligence Officer for Czechoslovakia. In her next assignment she was parachuted

behind German lines. Finally she worked for the Red Cross, with responsibility for the survivors from concentration camps.

After the war she was social secretary to the Duff-Coopers at the British Embassy in Paris for their final burst of high living at Hôtel de Charost. Returning to London in 1948, she resumed art history research at the Courtauld Institute, then a vortex of academic studies. There she met the distinguished émigré Sir Ernst Gombrich, Johannes Wilde and Rudolf Wittkower, as well as British historians. She joined Kenneth Clark's research team and later assisted Anthony Blunt in cataloguing the drawings by Stefano Della Bella in the Royal Collection. These towering personalities made a great impression on her, and she saw to it that they remembered her.

In 1956 she married the Polish historian and author Józef Kisilewski. Exiled from his homeland by the German and later the Communist authorities because of his patriotic writing, he became a prominent figure in the Polish community in London until his death in 1965.

Faced then with the need to support two sons, O'Donnell returned full time to art history. She had noticed that while universities taught the history of fine art and museums put on lectures and gallery talks, nobody offered a course that embraced all aspects of the fine and the decorative arts. So she de-



signed one that would appeal to aspiring museum keepers, country house owners, auctioneers and students alike.

Her principal ally was Sir Trenchard Cox, the Director of the V & A from 1956 to 1966, who permitted her to use the museum's lecture hall and galleries. The curriculum was established by a distinguished academic board, and lecturers were recruited from O'Donnell's circle at the museum and the Courtauld.

The study centre had no premises — and after 1975 it was entirely nomadic — so instead it operated out of her handbag, which also contained the stock of a tobacconist's shop. Keeping overheads to a minimum, the centre was personified by her diminutive figure in the habitual smock-dress. Circling round the V & A's entrance hall in a manner both unobtrusive and assertive, she might be interviewing a new student, calming a novice lecturer or reestablishing her flimsy territorial rights.

She developed persuasion as an art form, and few who knew her had not been thoroughly intimidated on at least one occasion. She was adept at kindling a sense of obligation, consistent in ignoring counter-arguments and resilient in the face of defeat, as when the study centre was ousted from the V & A in 1975.

Those who knew her well understood that she was formidable by design, not by nature. Tenacious and outspoken on behalf of others, she remained modest about herself, shy on formal occasions and in need of encouragement before speaking in public. She was not a natural teacher, but she proved a shrewd judge of character, quick to recognise the potential and limitations of both lecturers and students.

For promising students seeking work in the art world — a profession with more snakes than ladders — she was ready with advice on how to find careers appropriate to their interests and talents, and would then provide introductions and write references that were candid, perceptive and magisterial.

She retired as director of the study centre in 1990 and in the same year was appointed MBE. Recent years brought diabetes and suffering. Being one of life's givers, she remained independent and resisted more offers of help than she accepted. She took pride in the success of the study centre's alumni and above all in her two sons, who survive her.

ERIC BOURNE

Eric Bourne, foreign correspondent, died on February 27 aged 89. He was born on March 2, 1909.

ERIC BOURNE belonged to the golden age for newspaper foreign correspondents, before television intruded by providing coverage — in colour — the night before the papers appeared. But Bourne was never a member of the more glamorous foreign corps whose bylines were known to millions. Instead, he relied on an intimate knowledge of Eastern Europe and its key figures, which meant that his career survived the arrival of other media and even the collapse of the Communist regimes that he had studied for decades.

Bourne came from Sevenoaks, an unlikely starting point for one who spent much

of his time travelling up and down the Balkans like a character from an Eric Ambler novel. After Sevenoaks School he joined the *Sevenoaks Chronicle* and learnt shorthand, which was to prove most useful when covering the trials of Nazi war criminals.

He proceeded to the Press Association and the *News Chronicle*, the usual progress of an ambitious young reporter, and then in 1945 he moved to Reuters. This was his big chance. He became its bureau head in Germany and for ten months he covered the Nuremberg trials. He was the only journalist able to take down Rudolf Hess's jabbering final statement before he was sentenced to death.

Prom Reuters Bourne went to Prague for *The Sunday Times* and started reporting

regularly for the *Daily Express*. His speciality was the Balkans, and a telephone call from "Bourne of Belgrade" always meant that something worth printing was arriving.

Soon his remit extended to take in all of Eastern Europe. His contacts included Communist Party leaders as well as the early dissidents. He covered the Communist coup in Czechoslovakia in 1948, the Hungarian uprising in 1956 and the Soviet invasion of Prague in 1968. During the Hungarian uprising Bourne was in Budapest for *The Sunday Times* while the *Express* coverage was entrusted to Sefton Delmer, the paper's great star. Bourne, who was rightly proud of his professionalism, got his copy out, Delmer, after the first day, did not.

In the 1960s Bourne left Fleet Street for *The Christian Science Monitor*. It was a paper which appreciated expertise and in-depth reporting. Bourne, never a member of the trench-coat school of foreign correspondents, suited it admirably. He was still writing a column shortly before his death.

He was reticent, self-deprecating and quite unselfish. He liked nothing better than to share his knowledge with other correspondents who had arrived with little background knowledge of the situation they were expected to cover. He presided over select groups at the special tables he always had reserved for him at hotels in Eastern European capitals and provided what amounted to tutorials in current events.

He was married three times and leaves a wife and a son.

POOR HOTEL SERVICE VISITORS' EVIDENCE

The general conclusion that the public do not get the service which is reasonable and necessary in British hotels outside the luxury class has been arrived at by the hotels committee of the British Tourist and Holidays Board after hearing the evidence of a widely representative cross-section of hotel users.

It was also found that poor service and indifferent food in many cases drive overseas visitors to the continent of Europe, where standards in both service and food are higher; and that the remedy for some shortcomings lies in the hands of the hotelier. Action by the Government is urgently necessary to give relief from high wage costs, the high cost of furnishings and equipment largely due to purchase tax, the effect of unreasonable licensing laws, and the obstacle to good catering represented by the 5 shillings limit upon the price of meals in hotels and restaurants.

So far as hotels of the most expensive

ON THIS DAY

April 6, 1950

A not unfamiliar criticism of food in some British hotels but, it should be remembered, this report came at a time of austerity, only a few years after the end of the Second World War.

"luxury" type were concerned, the services provided by those in Britain ranked equal in every respect with those offered by hotels of the same type in other countries anywhere in the world.

The general opinion was that the reception of visitors on arrival at other hotels left a very good deal to be desired. Visitors liked to be made to feel that they were really welcome and not that they were a mere room number to be dealt with in an impersonal manner with the

utmost speed. Some witnesses had noted a deterioration in the quality of service compared with that given before the war, and some had noted an even greater deterioration in the past two years.

The general standard of comfort in lounges appeared on the whole to be reasonably satisfactory and the general opinion was that British beds were very comfortable, and that bedclothes were sufficient, with the proviso: "Some method of preventing eiderdowns from slipping off should be devised."

Breakfast was agreed to be the worst meal of the day, both in quantity and variety, and the suggestion was made that it could be improved by the provision of toast instead of bread, and by the addition of fresh fruit.

The general opinion, says the report, was that the standard of vegetable cooking was very low and that it could and should be improved upon. Boiled potatoes, whether served whole or mashed, were generally wet and unappetising looking, and green vegetables were too often accompanied by much of the water in which they had been boiled.

Fantasy League

Check your scores

Page 31

Reasons to be cheerful

Putting a smile back on the face of British tennis

Page 27

Win bonus

Also ran speeds his way to £7.1m prize

Page 30

ARTS



KEANU REEVES back in sci-fi action Page 32

TIMES SPORT

TUESDAY APRIL 6 1999

Everton's escape route cut off by Carbone

THEY have been playing with fire for so long that Everton must fear that their fingers will get burnt eventually. After 45 consecutive seasons of top-flight football, this could be the year that they go down in flames.

Everton's fourth successive defeat yesterday, greeted by loud and thoroughly deserved derision by their supporters, plunged them into the bottom three of the FA Carling Premiership. On Saturday, they had battled hard if unavailingly against Liverpool: the chances are that the only Merseyside derby next season will be between these sickly Toffees and Tranmere Rovers.

After a tolerably proficient first-half performance, in which Francis Jeffers's twelfth-minute strike represented something of a Goodison Park goal feast, Everton's subsequent decline bore all the hallmarks of a team destined for relegation.

Sheffield Wednesday took control and eventually took all three points, too, courtesy of a couple of defensive howlers that would not have been out of place over at Stanley Park in a Sunday morning pub game. Victory ended their own

Coventry battle on 25
Stuart strikes 25
Results and tables 24

run of five consecutive defeats and means that they are probably one more win from safety.

But for Everton, the prospects are grim. Four times in the past six seasons, they have flirted with danger and when they trooped, crestfallen, off the pitch to find that Graham Stuart, one of their former players, had scored the goal that gave Charlton Athletic victory away to West Ham United and condemned Walter Smith's team to eighteenth position, that dalliance had developed into a full-blown affair.

Everton can still save themselves. Of their six remaining matches, two are at home against their fellow strugglers, Coventry City and Charlton, but the doomsday scenario shared by increasingly distraught supporters has Everton playing Southampton at The Dell on the last Sunday of the season needing to win to survive. Last season, they stayed up on goal difference; this time, that may prove beyond them.

For Smith, after a decade of trophy-hunting with Rangers, this is a new and unpleasant experience. "It was a disappointing result, but even more so when you consider the manner in which we lost it," he said. "We handed Wednesday the game."

Wednesday's equaliser, in the 52nd minute, was a gift



by Keith Pike

pure and simple; their winner 16 minutes later came with ribbons and bows attached. The guilty men on both occasions were Marco Materazzi and David Unsworth, defenders with a combined transfer fee approaching £6 million. They held their heads in collective shame — and were entitled to for the first goal.

Materazzi's initial half-hearted clearance was fraught with danger and Unsworth compounded the error with an extravagant miskick that presented Benito Carbone with a clear shooting opportunity. The Italian seized on the opening, sending a low, right-foot drive beyond Myhre's right hand and inside the far post.

The roles were reversed for the second goal. Unsworth failed with a routine header, Materazzi made a pig's ear of his attempted back-pass and Carbone stole in grateful and unguarded again.

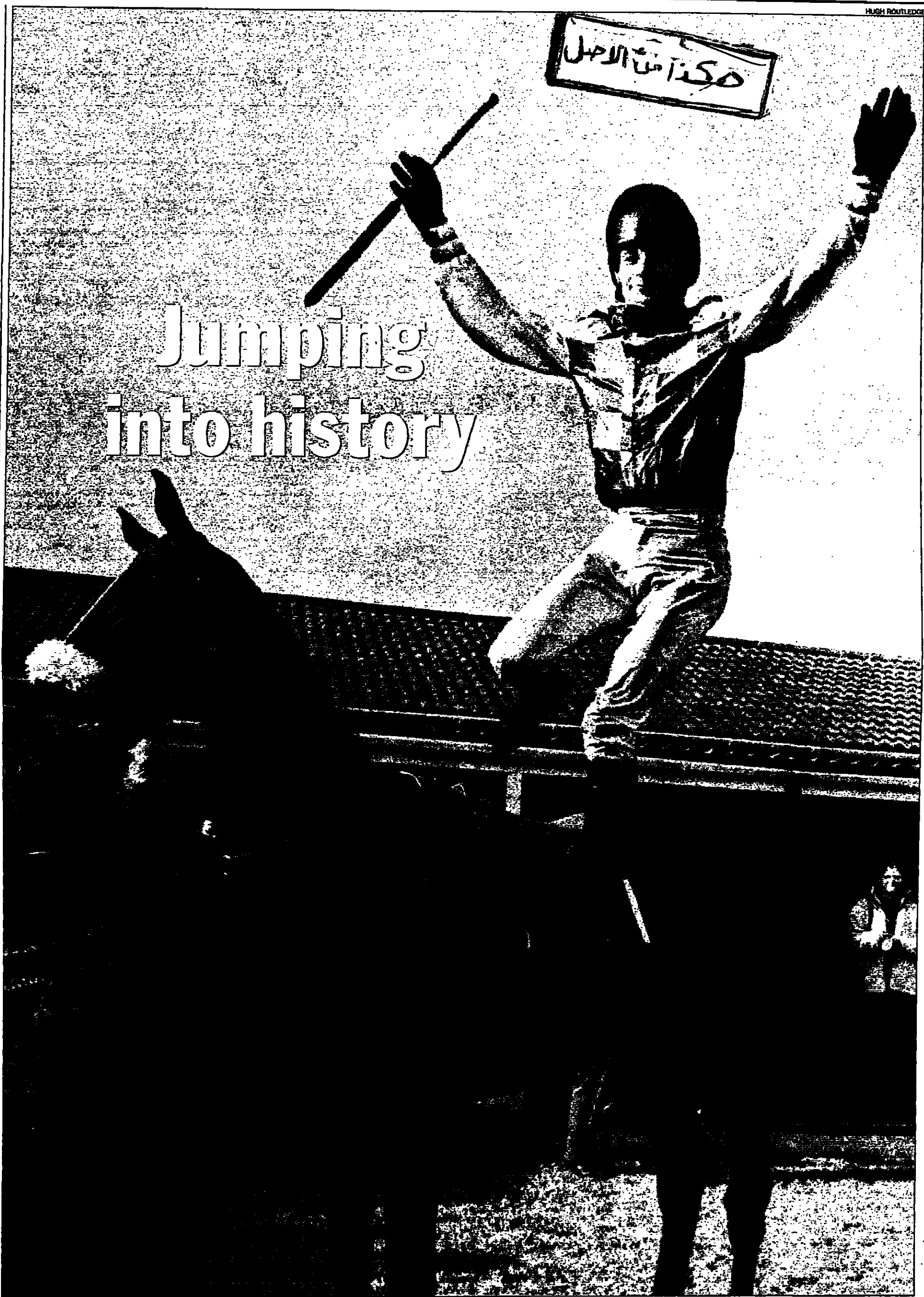
There was no way back for Everton, who withdrew Materazzi, switched to three at the back and flooded midfield. But their heart as well as their composure had gone and Wednesday coasted through the closing stages with ease.

The first half had been so much more promising. With Campbell a prominent spearhead and Gemmill delivering a series of precise passes, the two newcomers had caught the eye on their home debuts alongside Daoud in midfield. Everton fully deserved the lead given them by Jeffers, 18, who lobbed the ball calmly into an empty net from 18 yards when Campbell's aerial challenge on Snieck dislodged the ball from the Wednesday goalkeeper's grasp. It was only Everton's tenth goal in 24 hours of football at Goodison this season.

"We were desperate to win today and in the end I think we deserved it," Danny Wilson, the Wednesday manager, said. "We can't relax just yet, but this has made it a lot easier for us." For Everton and Smith, the agony is destined to continue for some time.

EVERTOWN (4-4-2): T. Myhre — D. West, C. Short, M. Materazzi (sub: P. Dagny, 74 min), D. Unsworth — S. Gemmill, A. Grant (sub: M. Ball, 74), O. Daoud, N. Bentley (sub: I. Bakayoko, 70) — F. Jeffers, K. Campbell. SHEFFIELD WEDNESDAY (4-4-2): P. S. — P. Atherton, E. Thorne, J. Newsome, A. Hinshelwood — N. Alexander-Dennis (sub: P. Scott, 70), D. Spiller, W. Jinks, P. Flait — A. Booth, B. Carbone (sub: R. Crosswell, 80). Referee: M. Reed

Jumping into history



High flyer: Richard Dunwoody leaps from Yorkshire Edition after breaking the record for career victories. Report, page 29

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Daley rubs salt into grievous wound

Birmingham City 1
Watford 2

BY CHRIS MOORE

GOALS from two former Aston Villa players made Birmingham City's first home defeat for five months all the less palatable yesterday as Watford enhanced their own prospects of making the Nationwide League first division play-offs.

On a day when Trevor Francis, the Birmingham manager, was tactically outmanoeuvred by Graham Taylor, his opposite number, the former England manager's decision to recall Tony Daley and Tommy Mooney, who began their careers across the city at Villa Park, proved to be a masterstroke and helped to produce a victory that leaves Watford only four points off a place among the top six.

Taylor has enjoyed six promotion-winning campaigns during his career, including hauling Watford up from the second division as champions last season, and, on this evidence, they cannot be underestimated during the run-in.

"We've still got it all to do, but if we keep winning, who knows what might happen for us," Taylor said.

"When you get to this stage of the season, the teams in the play-off positions can start to get a bit edgy. Right now, being in a chasing position might suit us better than having to be looking over our shoulder. We've got a massive game coming up next against Bolton at home on Saturday and, if we beat them, we'll be only one point behind and back in business."

Birmingham had been beaten in only one of their previous 17 games, but without Dele Adebola and Paul Furlong, their injured heavyweights, lacked the physical presence to strengthen their challenge for an automatic promotion position.

Daley, who has been playing for his "digs" money for most of the season, came up trumps in only his sixth start for the club by laying on the opening goal in the 26th minute, the non-stop Mooney heading home his deep cross at the far post.

Mooney repaid the compliment in the 58th minute, providing an inch-perfect cross for Daley to score with a rare header. David Holdsworth cut the deficit with a close-range header in the 87th minute, but it was too little, too late.

BIRMINGHAM CITY (4-2-2): J. Burt (sub: N. Foster, 68min), D. Holdsworth (sub: M. Johnson, 58min), S. Gray (sub: J. McCarthy, 61), B. Hughes, G. Hyde, M. O'Connor, L. M. Morgan, L. Bradley (sub: H. Foster, 69), P. Hedges.

WATFORD (4-3-3): A. Chamberlain, D. Beasley, S. Palmer, R. Page, P. Robinson — A. Hixon (sub: M. Hyde, 60min), A. Daley (sub: A. Burrell, 78), T. Mooney, A. Street.

Referee: J. Kirby

Bradford can thank Windass

DEAN WINDASS was on target as Bradford City kept up the pressure on Ipswich Town in the fight for an automatic promotion place from the Nationwide League first division with a 2-0 victory at Gigg Lane (Mel Webb writes).

Windass, signed from Oxford United, scored both Bradford's goals in a scrappy, untidy game that extended Bury's dismal run to a club record-equaling 19 games without a victory.

Beagrie and Sharpe, the Bradford wingers, tormented the Bury defence and Beagrie made the first goal in the 28th minute with a cross that Windass headed in at the near post. Beagrie exchanged short passes with Jacobs from a corner two minutes before heading home at the near post.

In the second division, Gillingham moved up to fifth place as goals from Ashley and Asaba accounted for Wycombe Wanderers at Adams Park, but Stoke City lost more ground in the contest for a play-off place in a dull 1-1 draw away to Chesterfield, whereas Wigan Athletic kept their challenge alive by beating Oldham Athletic 2-0 at Springfield Park.

Cardiff City, leaders of the third division, were given an early shock when Alcide gave Hull City the lead at Ninian Park, but Nugent equalised with a penalty 16 minutes from time.

Brentford strengthened their grip on the third automatic promotion place with a 3-1 win over Plymouth Argyle. Goals from Evans and Mahon put them ahead, but Marshall pulled one back before Palfrey scored a third near the end.

Nationwide League: Carlisle United lose ground in battle for survival

Tate delights Scarborough gallery

Scarborough 3
Carlisle United 0

BY MARTIN WOODS

FRANK MALONEY, the manager of Lennox Lewis, was watching this game alongside Paul Ingle, his featherweight prospect, from Scarborough, who challenges Naseem Hamed for the world title on Saturday. Such was the controversial first-half performance of Roger Fumandiz, the referee, that Maloney could have been forgiven for thinking he was back at Madison Square Gardens.

Fumandiz managed to upset both sets of supporters during a frantic opening half-hour by denying the visitors a penalty and failing to dismiss David Bass, of Carlisle United, for a foul on the Jones, the Scarborough forward, in the penalty area.

Unlike the Lewis v Evander Holyfield contest in New York, however, the home supporters were not embarrassed by the result and were grateful that Chris Tate, the Scarborough forward, was able to deliver the knockout blows with three well-taken goals. The margin of victory flattered the home team, but such quibbles fail to impress teams fighting for their future in the Nationwide League.

Carlisle, who moved off bottom place in the third division after their 1-1 draw with Hull City on Saturday, were four points behind Carlisle with two games in hand before this game, but, in front of their biggest crowd of the season, home advantage compounded their nervousness and the visitors had the upper hand before conceding a sloppy goal to after 32 minutes.

A ball played in from the left wing confused three Carlisle defenders, allowing Tate to



Hoyland, right, of Scarborough, challenges strongly against Brightwell, of Carlisle at the McCain Stadium yesterday

Scarborough, who moved off bottom place in the third division after their 1-1 draw with Hull City on Saturday, were four points behind Carlisle with two games in hand before this game, but, in front of their biggest crowd of the season, home advantage compounded their nervousness and the visitors had the upper hand before conceding a sloppy goal to after 32 minutes.

A ball played in from the left wing confused three Carlisle defenders, allowing Tate to

turn and fire home. Carlisle could have equalised six minutes later, when Bagshaw found Tracey unmarked in the penalty area, but he shot straight at Tony Parks, the Scarborough goalkeeper, from six yards.

Carlisle continued to press for the equaliser and, just before half-time, a header from Hopper went narrowly past the post.

Richard Knight, the Carlisle goalkeeper, kept his side in the game straight after the break

with a superb save from Roberts and two minutes later the same forward forced Knight to make another good save after being put clear by Atkinson. Carlisle were unable to muster an attack of their own as Scarborough continued to press forward and two further goals from Tate after 61 and 62 minutes settled the game. A superb cross from the left wing by Roberts found Tate, who headed powerfully past Knight, then Roberts set up the forward again to shoot home from the edge of the penalty area.

I can't put a price on that victory — the boys were magnificent," Colin Addison, the Scarborough manager, said. "There were a few words said at half-time and the boys came out and did me proud. We deserved the three points."

Tate, who is on contract until the end of the season, said: "It was a battle. We didn't play our best football, but Tony Parks played brilliantly."

Scarborough are beginning to relish their fight for survival. Carlisle had better start learning soon.

SCARBOROUGH (4-4-2): T. Parks — G. Stan, S. Harrison (sub: B. Worral, 49min), J. Hoyland, G. Atkinson — N. Jones, G. Porter, P. Atkinson, S. Mackay — C. Tate (sub: A. Kaye, 85), D. Roberts (sub: L. Robertson, 75).

CARLISLE UNITED (4-4-2): R. Knight — R. Gorman, D. Brightwell, P. Clark (sub: G. Macdonald, 63), D. Seane — R. Prokes, S. Chalmers, D. Hopper (sub: G. Anthony, 78), R. Tracey — P. Bagshaw, D. Bass.

Referee: R. Fumandiz

Defiant Palace delay the inevitable

Crystal Palace 1
Sunderland 1

BY ALYSON RUDD

THE sense of impatience was palpable. Sunderland are bound for the FA Carling Premiership, they have been for many months, but the day that they can relax with promotion a mathematical certainty was delayed, albeit slightly, by this result.

After a first half in which Crystal Palace were the more inventive and brightly team, thoroughly deserving their 35th-minute equaliser, Sunderland gave, during the second period, a far better impression of a side destined for greater things.

That Palace did not capitulate was testimony to the team spirit that Steve Coppell has instilled among players who have much to feel disappointed about. With their wallets brimming with 100s and team-mates leaving at an alarming rate to bring the wage bill down, a miserly effort from the home team might have been expected. Instead, they pulled together and irritated Sunderland with their pace and stamina.

Coppell has not only the administrators to contend with but the fact that two members of his shrinking squad are Serbs. Coppell's original view had been that the distraction was too great to risk playing either Curic or Petric, but the latter's mother told her son to keep playing. Coppell fell in with her wishes and Petric defended admirably throughout, even surviving a spat with Quinn, during which, according to his manager, "he lost it for a bit".

Sunderland took the lead midway through the first half when Phillips met Johnston's corner kick to score with the simplest of headers. Palace responded with gusto: Fan Zhili crossed to Thomson, whose shot struck McKenzie. He turned on the loose ball and his effort was parried by Sorensen before being forced over the line by Morrison.

Kevin Miller, the Palace goalkeeper, was faultless in the second half, the pick of a crop of inspired saves coming in the 83rd minute. Clark, who seemed certain to score, instead passed to Johnston, who had time to pick his spot but found Miller equal to the challenge.

One of these clubs has a rosy future, the other faces one too bleak to dwell upon, but for 90 minutes at least, you would never have guessed it.

CRYSTAL PALACE (3-5-2): K. Miller — D. Woodley, H. Mullins, G. Potts — D. Austin, S. Thomson, C. Foster, F. Zhy, S. J. — C. Morrison, L. McKenna.

SUNDERLAND (4-4-2): T. Sorensen — C. Mackin (sub: D. Holdsworth, 88min), P. Butler, A. Melville, M. Gray — N. Sumner, B. Ball, L. Clark, A. Johnston — N. Quinn, K. Phillips.

Referee: A. D'Urso

Preston keeps Manchester threat at bay

Preston North End 1
Manchester City 1

BY STEPHEN WOOD

THERE is no question which side would have treasured this stalemate more yesterday. Preston North End and Manchester City fought each other to a standstill and the shared points ensured that Preston were able to keep City's challenge at the top of the Nationwide League second division at arm's length.

Both clubs entered the contest with contrasting form, so much so that City, with four consecutive victories, were beginning to dream of supplanting Preston as favourites for automatic promotion. Indeed, the implications of defeat were serious enough for the blood and thunder of this Lancashire derby to override the obligation for stylish football.

As the crowd of 20,857 — Preston's biggest at Deepdale in 25 years — roared their men on, so the players got caught up in a whirlwind that, alas,

aged only sporadically in each penalty box. That did not ruin the spectacle altogether, however. The ferocity that characterised the midfield tussles was compelling — and it nearly got the better of Sean Gregan. Moments before half-time, the Preston captain appeared to elbow Michael Brown after Brown had committed a foul. Kevin Lynch, the referee, declined to take any action.

City had begun with a whimper, leaving Steve Basham, the Preston striker, on

loan from Southampton, unmarked, and to head past Weaver, the City goalkeeper. Just 58sec had passed on the clock.

The City equaliser, after 22 minutes, owed something to luck. The ball broke outside the area to Brown, whose low shot was deflected in.

There were few further clear-cut chances, so both managers gambled on their reserves. Mark Robins, the former Manchester United striker, came on for his City debut, but he looked woefully

unfit. For Preston, Jonathan Macken, another with United connections, looked more promising.

David Moyes, the Preston manager, said: "City are a big, physical side and we had to match them. We did that and I think we'll settle for a point."

PRESTON NORTH END (4-4-2): D. Lucas — G. Alexander, M. Jackson, C. Murdoch, N. Clement — P. McKenna, M. Raftery (sub: M. Appleton, 74min), S. Gregan, D. Eynon — K. Nogan (sub: J. Macken, 66), S. Basham.

MANCHESTER CITY (4-4-2): N. Weaver — L. Crooks, A. Morrison, T. Vaughan, R. Edgill — T. Cooke, J. Pollock (sub: J. Bishop, 64), M. Brown, K. Horlock — S. Gosler, G. Taylor (sub: M. Robins, 57).

Referee: K. Lynch

Osborn keeps Wolves in pack

Sheffield United 1
Wolverhampton Wanderers 1

BY A CORRESPONDENT

THE destiny of Wolverhampton Wanderers — and what partisan supporters believe to be their rightful place in the FA Carling Premiership — remains firmly in their hands after a dramatic finale at Bramall Lane. The future of Colin Lee, their manager, is a little less clear, though.

His side has lost just once in 15 games since Boxing Day and, after taking this point from Sheffield United, will surely contest the Nationwide League first division play-offs. Yet, despite this record, the offer of the security provided by a long-term contract still

eludes Lee, whose fate will be decided at the end of the season.

A 62nd-minute goal from Marcelo, the Brazilian striker, proved to be a false inspiration for Sheffield United's hopes. Marcelo was left with a tap-in from six yards after a run and cross by Lee Morris, the teenage midfielder player.

Devlin should have added a second shortly afterwards, but his first touch, like many in the match, lacked composure and the chance was lost.

Wolves secured the point for which they had strived when Corrie, a substitute, was fouled by Tebbly on the edge of the penalty area with just five minutes remaining. After much debate and construction of the wall,

Simon Osborn curled the free kick over it and beyond Alan Kelly, the Sheffield goalkeeper. Earlier, Kelly had made a fine save when Connolly and Robinson combined to put the latter through.

Robert Styles, the referee, booked seven players, five for Sheffield, in a game that lacked genuine passion. In the 86th minute, Rob Kozluk, the Sheffield full back, was sent off for a second bookable offence after he pushed Gilles.

SHEFFIELD UNITED (4-4-2): A. Kelly — R. Kozluk, J. Hunt, C. Woodhouse (sub: A. Jackson, 88min), L. Morris (sub: S. Derry, 88) — M. Corrie, A. Campbell (sub: P. Kitchener, 40).

Referee: R. Styles

Ipswich Town 3
Queens Park Rangers 1

BY GORDON HOWARD

AFTER successive disappointments in the play-offs in recent seasons, Ipswich Town confirmed yesterday that they are on course for an automatic return to the FA Carling Premiership with a deserved victory over Queens Park Rangers.

Their performance may not have contained the delights of their six-goal romp at Swindon on Saturday, but it was full of determination and it was their persistence which brought rewards after Rangers had taken an unexpected lead.

Rangers, although always well organised, could have no complaints, even though Ips-

wich did make a sloppy start and conceded a goal after only four minutes. Chris Kiwomya, the former Ipswich player, took advantage of some casual defending to glance a header past the helpless Richard Wright.

If Ipswich needed a wake-up call, to wipe out any complacency, this was it and they soon responded with an equaliser. Jim Magilton's deep cross finding David Johnson, who headed his fifteenth goal of the season.

After their bright start, Rangers appeared content to sit back and suffocate the Ipswich attack and the home side were clearly getting frustrated. Their diligence was rewarded in the 65th minute when James Sowcott headed in a cross by Mark Venus for his thirteenth

goal of the season. Gerry Francis, the Rangers manager, promptly made two substitutions, but nine minutes later, Ipswich killed off the contest when Matt Holland struck their third with an angled 20-yard drive from the left of the penalty area.

George Kulcsar was cautioned for a clumsy tackle on Mick Stockwell and Kiwomya's eventual return to East Anglia concluded with his being shown a yellow card for a late tackle on Holland in the final minute.

IPSWICH TOWN (3-5-2): R. Wright — J. Conboy, A. Mowbray, M. Venus, W. M. Stockwell, J. Magilton, M. Holland, J. Chapman — J. Sowcott (sub: R. Naylor, 86min), D. Johnson (sub: M. Hoesler, 88), S. Kewell (sub: J. B. Brown, 88), S. Kewell (sub: J. B. Brown, 88), S. Kewell (sub: J. B. Brown, 88).

Referee: W. Burns

Bolton let play-off hopes slip

Bolton Wanderers 1
Stockport County 2

BY BILL EDGAR

THE revolving door that has taken Bolton Wanderers between the Nationwide League and the FA Carling Premiership seems to be coming off at the hinges. Prime candidates six weeks ago for automatic promotion from the first division, they have declined to the point where even a place in the play-offs may elude them.

The defeat at the Reebok Stadium yesterday means they have won only one of their past nine league games. They were, however, a little unfortunate not to get at least a draw against a Stockport County team that created few chances aside from the two that they converted.

Such was the quality of Bolton's midfield play that it was a surprise when County took the lead through Tony Ellis in the 27th minute, who put the finishing touches to a pass from Angell. Bolton equalised in the 48th minute when Johnsen curled a cross towards Taylor, who hooked the ball home from six yards.

Nash saved well from Gardner and a home win seemed to be on the cards, but instead it was Stockport who had the winning hand. With 15 minutes left, Ellis was tackled in the Bolton area and Colin Woodhouse drove the loose ball into the far corner.

BOLTON WANDERERS (4-4-2): S. Nash — N. Cox, M. Fish, P. Westwood, R. B. Johnson, C. Jordan, P. Farnham, R. Gardner — R. Taylor, D. Holdsworth (sub: B. B. Johnson, 60min), S. Taylor (sub: B. B. Johnson, 60min), S. Taylor (sub: B. B. Johnson, 60min).

Referee: G. Lewis

YESTERDAY'S RESULTS AND TABLES

FA Carling Premiership															
CLUB	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts	CLUB	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1. Arsenal	31	18	12	3	60	32	64	2. Tottenham	31	15	12	5	53	33	50
3. Manchester United	31	16	11	4	45	23	51	4. Liverpool	31	16	9	6	50	28	57
5. Chelsea	31	16	9	6	50	28	57	6. Newcastle	31	12	11	8	42	44	41
7. Blackburn	31	12	11	8	36	44	41	8. Everton	31	12	9	10	39	37	42
9. Wimbledon	31	11	11	9	36	44	41	10. West Ham	31	11	9	11	36	44	41
11. Southampton	31	10	12	9	34	38	39	12. Middlesbrough	31	10	11	10	32	38	39
13. Sheffield Wednesday	31	9	16	6	36	38	39	14. Bolton	31	9	15	7	34	37	39
15. Leicester	31	9	15	7	34	37	39	16. Cardiff	31	9	14	8	34	37	39
17. Coventry	31	9	14	8	34	37	39	18. Birmingham	31	9	14	8	34	37	39
19. Charlton	31	7	10	14	34	41	31	20. Blackburn	31	7	10	14	34	41	31
21. Preston	31	7	10	14	34	41	31	22. Reading	31	7	10	14	34	41	31
23. Sunderland	31	7	10	14	34	41	31	24. Norwich	31	7	10	14	34	41	31
25. Sheffield United	31	7	10	14	34	41	31	26. Ipswich	31	7	10	14	34	41	31
27. Wolves	31	7	10	14	34	41	31	28. QPR	31	7	10	14	34	41	31
29. Burnley	31	7	10	14	34	41	31	30. Nottm Forest	31	7	10	14	34	41	31
31. Bury	31	7	10	14	34	41	31	32. Luton	31	7	10	14	34	41	31

Does not include last night's match

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Nationwide League										
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FA Carling Premiership: Two strugglers gain welcome victories in fight to stay in top flight

Relegation skies start to clear over Coventry

LIKE the clock on the scoreboard, which was turning its hands faster than time was passing yesterday — it ran up four hours during the second half — Coventry City have got ahead of themselves. Traditionally, if it is April, the clouds of relegation should be hovering over Highfield Road, but they are being dispersed unusually early. Blue skies are accompanying the Sky Blues into the last six weeks of the season.

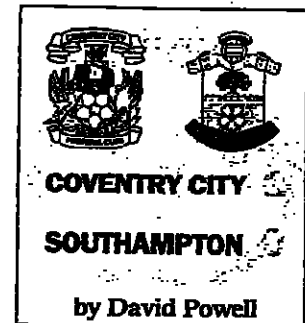
A 68th-minute goal by George Boateng settled this season and, with hindsight, David Jones, their manager, probably wishes he had played Matthew Le Tissier from the start, rather than from the beginning of the second half. The Coventry goal had one narrow escape in the first half, a shot from James Beattie being deflected for a corner, but not until Le Tissier came on did the danger light change from amber to red.

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entry. A right-wing cross from Gary Breen found Trond Solvetvik unmarked and the Norwegian's header forced a fine save out of Neil Moss, the Southampton reserve goalkeeper, who was standing in for the injured Paul Jones. Boateng, though, was first to the loose ball.

Coventry thus took their thirteenth point from their past six games to move four places clear of the relegation zone. Not that Gordon Strachan, the Coventry manager, is making assumptions about being back for another Premiership season come August. "Safe now, Gordon?" he was asked. "Have you ever been to Coventry?" his inquisitor was asked.

Victory here would have taken Southampton out of the bottom three for the first time



by David Powell

this season and, with hindsight, David Jones, their manager, probably wishes he had played Matthew Le Tissier from the start, rather than from the beginning of the second half. The Coventry goal had one narrow escape in the first half, a shot from James Beattie being deflected for a corner, but not until Le Tissier came on did the danger light change from amber to red.

Le Tissier replaced Wayne Bridge wide on the left and, within three minutes of appearing, produced a telling cross from which Beattie directed a header low to Magnus Hedman's right. The Coventry goalkeeper responded with an athletic, one-handed save. Twice in three minutes in the final quarter, as Southampton searched for an equaliser, Le Tissier tested the nerves of the Coventry faithful.

From a cross by Hassan Kachoul, Le Tissier headed over. Then Hedman went down smartly to his left to keep out a volley from the Southampton man. Asked why Le Tissier, returning from suspension, had not played the 90 minutes, Jones said: "Because the lads who played on Saturday performed well and I lost Ripley and Os-



Sitting target: Boateng takes a relaxed view after scoring the winning goal for Coventry City at Highfield Road

tenstad, so it was a case of not making too many changes."

Perhaps Jones had forgotten that it was Le Tissier who had made the difference in the 2-1 home victory over Coventry back in October. On that occasion, he made one and scored one.

The Bank Holiday weekend served only to underline the contrast in Southampton's form at home and away. They drew with Arsenal at The Dell on Saturday, but yesterday suffered their twelfth defeat in 16 Premiership away fixtures. "I could put my finger on the

reason why. I would have done so a long time ago," Jones said.

He blamed a combination of his players, for "switching off" at certain times, and Uriah Rennie, the referee. "He makes up his own rules as he goes along," Jones said. "He has given out bookings and silly free kicks." Though critical of his team's lackadaisical approach to the first half, Jones added: "In the second half, we had a go."

Coventry were also vexed by Rennie, but at least their supporters had their moment of

fun. After booking Boateng for kicking the ball away, the third Coventry player to have his name taken, Rennie dropped his collection of cards on the pitch.

For Coventry, Solvetvik came in for the injured Steve Froggatt and Strachan felt that he had a "fantastic" game. Breen, on the other hand, had the kind of match to forget. He had a header cleared off the line by David Hughes, fired one over and, presented by Darren Huckerby with a perfect cross to his feet, put his shot wide.

The lion's share of chances fell to Coventry. Boateng missed the target, with Moss beaten, after Ken Monkou's half-clearance. Monkou had to be rescued by Moss when his back-header angled towards goal and the goalkeeper also saved well from a firm drive by Noel Whelan.

COVENTRY CITY (4-4-2): M Hedman — G Breen, P Williams, R Shaw, D Barnes — G Boateng, G Hockley, T Solvetvik, P Tait — M Whelan, D Huckerby (sub: S Gloatch, 87min). SOUTHAMPTON (4-4-2): N Moss — J Dodd, K Monkou, C Lundekvam, P Collier — S Hiley, D Hughes, C Meredith, W Bridge (sub: M Le Tissier, 46) — J Beattie (sub: M Peters, 70), M Hughes (sub: H Kachoul, 77). Referee: U Rennie

Stuart gives Charlton lift towards security

GRAHAM STUART knows all about scoring important goals. His late strike against Wimbledon at Goodison Park on the last day of the 1993-94 season kept Everton in the top flight. If his 75th-minute winner at Upton Park yesterday proves to have helped do the same for Charlton Athletic, the £1 million that they paid Sheffield United for him just before the transfer deadline could prove one of the best investments of recent seasons.

In truth, Stuart owed his new employers a goal. In a game of squandered chances, he had been guilty of the biggest howler, powder-puffing Mark Bowen's low cross into the hands of Shaka Hislop in the 43rd minute with the goal at his mercy.

By then, Charlton had lost John Robinson, carried off with a leg injury, and were to see Sasa Ilc, their goalkeeper, taken away on a stretcher with head and knee injuries after a collision with Marc Keller. The West Ham man had followed a high parry by Ilc of a shot by Frank Lampard into the net. Charlton's relief when Steve Dunn, the referee, spotted an upraised flag was short-lived as the extent of Ilc's difficulties became clear.

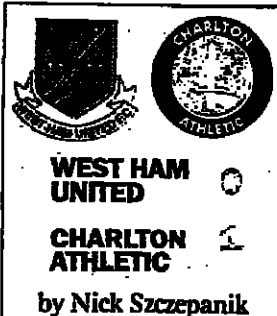
Both Charlton players were taken to hospital for X-rays, but neither is thought to have suffered lasting damage. Apart from a wobble from Peterson, the replacement goalkeeper, soon after half-time, when Pearce headed past him only for Danny Mills to clear the danger, Charlton did not seem to be adversely affected by the departures and continued to attack. Martin Pringle, Bowen and Andy Hunt all forcing excellent saves from Hislop.

However, it was anything but one-way traffic. West Ham, although missing the creativity of Eyal Berkovic until his late appearance as a substitute, nevertheless threatened whenever Paolo Di Canio was given time to play a selection of exquisitely weighted passes; unfortunately, Paul Kitson, who seemed to be on the end of most of these moves, was having an off-day.

Just when it seemed that logic would be defied and a ridiculously open game would finish goalless, Rufus headed on a free kick by Mills, Minto and Hislop hesitated and Stuart, on his second appearance for the club, nipped in behind them to head into the empty net.

"We never felt it was going to come," Alan Curbishley, the Charlton manager, said. "He [Stuart] had missed a glorious chance and was very upset with himself at half-time."

An alleged post-match altercation in the tunnel involving Neil Ruddock and Carl Tiler could feature in the referee's report, but of more interest was the performance of John Barnes, who would probably



by Nick Szczepanik

not have played his first full 90 minutes for Charlton (nearer 100, as it turned out) if two substitutes had not been used before half-time. He finished limping, but had shown rare composure before the legs finally gave up.

Harry Redknapp, the West Ham manager, who has seen Charlton beat his team twice this season, said: "They gave it a go. I've said from day one that they wouldn't go down."

Charlton's win, their first in five games, took them up three places to sixteenth, two positions above the relegation zone, but they have a tough programme to come, including visits from Leeds United and Tottenham Hotspur, and



Stuart: vital goal

fixtures against Everton and Blackburn, teams also threatened by relegation, so Curbishley is not getting carried away.

"There's a long way to go for us," he said. "I felt on Saturday against Chelsea it was a bit passionless for a local derby and we gave them too much respect. Today was a gutsy, full-of-pride performance."

Part of Curbishley's plan to rouse those dormant emotions involved a pre-match meeting at The Valley, where he asked his players if they wanted to continue playing in front of the full houses they have drawn to what is now an impressive stadium. They will continue to do so only if they stay in the FA Carling Premiership and yesterday they took a big step towards achieving that objective.

WEST HAM UNITED (4-4-2): S Hislop — S Lomas, J Pearce, N Ruddock, S Minto — I Smith, F Lampard, M Voe, M Keller — P Keson (sub: E Berkovic, 70min), P Di Canio. CHARLTON ATHLETIC (4-4-2): S Ilc (sub: A Peterson, 43) — D Mills, S Rufus, C Tier, C Powell — J Robinson (sub: M Bowen, 40), M Kinsella, J Barnes, G Stuart — A Hunt (sub: K Jones, 60), M Pringle. Referee: S Dunn.

Dire Liverpool sink to new depths at Forest



Owen: 22nd goal this season was not enough for victory

LIVERPOOL and Europe go hand in hand, a marriage not of convenience but of necessity. So frequently have they enriched the three continental competitions down the years, so many memorable matches, only three times in the past 35 seasons have Liverpool failed to qualify for Europe.

Make that four in 36. Liverpool will not grace the Nou Camp or San Siro next season unless Uefa, the sports European governing body, changes its mind and allows the fifth-placed club in the FA Carling Premiership to sneak in via the back door. It is the most that Gerard Houllier, the Liverpool manager, and his pampered players can hope for.

Statistically, they are not good enough. They have long been removed from contention in the domestic cups and are

destined to finish well behind Manchester United and Arsenal. No greater was their collective ineffectiveness, their paucity of ideas, illustrated than in the shabby draw against Nottingham Forest at the City ground yesterday.

It is mentally, though — perhaps even morally — where Liverpool have been dragged into the depths. Wearing the red shirt with pride now appears to be posed, inspiration and motivation has disappeared under a welter of inflated pay packets and egos.

Robbie Fowler, the England striker, has done more than most to bring disrepute on himself, his team-mates and all those who live and breathe Anfield. First, during the game against Chelsea in February, he questioned the sexuality of Graeme Le Saux; then,



by Russell Kempson

during the game against Everton on Saturday, he mimicked the actions of a drug-taker as he celebrated a goal. When a Football Association commission meets on Friday to decide what action to take on the first offence, they should perhaps consider the second, too.

Houllier, a decent man, stands amid the mess — on the

one hand defending his troops, as all good generals do; on the other, trying to do what is right, something that will bring some sanity back to an increasingly perplexing situation.

Liverpool are holding a board meeting today, during which it is likely that Fowler's latest escapade will be discussed. Fowler played lethargically and was replaced in the 79th minute. He was not alone. Apart from Redknapp in midfield, most of the Liverpool side appeared ready for the end of the season.

Forest are doomed to return to the Nationwide League first division and, had Liverpool deigned to shake a leg, would have had their fate hastened.

Redknapp enlivened a dreadful first half with a glorious 25-yard drive after Ince

had tapped a free kick sideways. Carragher should have added to the tally but headed over the crossbar after McManaman, who is bound for Real Madrid and looking demob happy already, had flicked on a corner by Berger.

Forest are at least going down fighting. Freedman bundled in an equaliser from a throw by Rogers and, after Owen had restored Liverpool's lead with his 22nd goal of the season, Van Hooijdonk levelled again in the last minute from a trademark free kick, lashed in from 20 yards.

NOTTINGHAM FOREST (4-4-2): M Crossley — M Lisle-Jean, N Shipperley, 86min, R Ough, C Edwards, T Scoville — P van Hooijdonk, A Johnson, C Palmer, A Rogers — D Freedman (sub: B Allou, 78), M Greenwood. LIVERPOOL (4-4-2): D Jones — R Sory, J Carragher, S Stevenson, D Maitland — S McManaman (sub: K Floide, 67), P Ince, J Redknapp, P Berger — M Owen, R Fowler (sub: S Gerrard, 60). Referee: D Galtagher

Bergkamp returns to aid Arsenal in title pursuit

By MEL WEBB

ARSENAL and Blackburn Rovers may be driven by opposite ambitions as the FA Carling Premiership season approaches its dénouement, but the objective for each side will be similar when they meet at Highbury tonight.

Theoretically, this should be the time of year when the gulf between those contending for championships and others toiling to avoid relegation should be seen most vividly — but it ain't necessarily so.

For example, Blackburn go to North London bolstered by a record that has seen them undefeated at Highbury for the past five years. The past should have no relevance as to what might happen in the present, but footballers are superstitious folk and, after all, Blackburn need every small advantage that they can lay their hands on.

Arsenal are in the fortunate position of not usually needing anything as ephemeral as mere luck — who needs luck when you have a first team squad like theirs? Even so, they will be hoping that the gulf between them and their opponents will be widened by the return to their ranks of the talismanic Dennis Bergkamp. He missed Arsenal's disappointing goalless draw against Southampton on Saturday but is expected to have

recovered from a stomach virus sufficiently to take his place in Arsenal's starting line-up.

Arsenal's need for points is no less urgent than Blackburn's. Three points against Brian Kidd's team of high-investment strugglers will keep them in touch with Manchester United — none would almost certainly mean that they can forget such exotica as League and Cup doubles for another year.

Arsène Wenger, the Arsenal manager, knows that the apparent gulf between his side and Kidd's will be narrowed when the action gets underway. "It's a very important game for us to win, but every game at home will be crucial between now and the end of the season," he said.

"We have the determination and desire to do it, but we know that Blackburn will fight hard. Manchester United, Chelsea and Leeds will all come against the same problem before the race is over."

Wenger has a few injury problems. Martin Keown had to go off with an ankle strain at The Dell and Marc Overmars has been suffering from infected blisters on his feet. Both, plus Bergkamp, were back in training yesterday,

but Emanuel Petit is still suspended and Renni Gardie and Stephen Hughes, possible replacements for the Frenchman, are still recovering from injuries.

If Bergkamp plays, he could find himself being marked by Lee Carsley, a recent £3.3 million signing from Derby County. The rugged midfielder player has had an ankle injury, but might make his first full appearance after coming off the substitutes' bench against Middlesbrough on Saturday.

Leicester City go into their match against Aston Villa at Filbert Street tonight with Martin O'Neill, their manager, insisting that his side still has a chance of winning a place in Europe.

Leicester are thirteenth in the table, but O'Neill believes that victory against Villa will keep them firmly in the hunt for a place in the Uefa Cup. O'Neill's main injuries are centred upon Muzzy Izzet, who has a pulled hamstring, Steve Walsh, who has an ankle injury, and Gerry Taggart, who is recovering from flu.

One Villa player is assured of a warm reception from the Leicester crowd. Julian Joachim left Leicester for Villa three years ago, still lives in the town and has a half-share in a local Chinese restaurant.

Ferguson has full squad for Juventus

By OUR SPORTS STAFF

THE rapier qualities of Ryan Giggs and the more rumbustious talents of Jaap Stam will both be available to Manchester United when they face Juventus in their European Cup semi-final first leg at Old Trafford tomorrow.

The pair were declared fit by Alex Ferguson, the United manager, after they trained with the rest of the squad yesterday. Both sat out the 1-1 draw at Wimbledon on Saturday, Stam nursing an ankle injury and Giggs suffering from a hamstring complaint. Their return means that Ferguson will have a full-strength squad to choose from.

United are in excellent shape going into their biggest week of the season so far. Ferguson's treble-chasers remain four points clear at the top of the FA Carling Premiership and on Sunday there is the FA Cup semi-final against Arsenal at Villa Park.

Ferguson is confident that his players will once again rise to the challenge. "What helps, of course, is that we've got a good, strong squad. We have not had a long injury list and pray to the Lord and touch wood we hope it remains that way," he said. "The spirit in the camp is great and we're all looking forward to this week."

In particular, Ferguson feels that his side have taken great heart from their quarter-final win over Internazionale. "I think this team is improving and I think beating Inter Milan did help them," he said. "That brought them to a great stride and now it's just a matter of them being able to express themselves and make sure their concentration is good."

While all is sweetness and light in the United camp, all is not well with Juventus. The Serie A side, who have appeared in the past three European Cup finals, have stumbled through to the semi-finals, winning just two of their past eight games.

They are adrift in the race for the Italian championship and although Carlo Ancelotti, the coach, has improved the fortunes of the club during his two months in charge, they lost 1-0 away to Empoli, who are at the bottom of the Serie A table on Saturday.

Ferguson's brother, Martin, watched the game and the Manchester United boss is not reading too much into that result.

"It will be a different team altogether on Wednesday," he said. "They had five players out on Saturday and we are preparing for a hard game."

Wimbledon's weaknesses are exposed by Ricard



by George Caulkin

THEY call it the comfort zone, but Wimbledon wore the pained expression of men pricked by a thousand pins. Relative safety is Middlesbrough's preserve and yet they play with a desperate hunger. Entering the Inter-Toto Cup has met with a conflicting response: lunatic alarm and miserable apathy.

The guilty finger-prints of fallibility are everywhere, of course, for both these clubs have harboured fleeting ambitions of qualifying for European competition via a more recognised route. Middlesbrough performed as if the Uefa Cup remained a realistic opportunity; Wimbledon displayed a lifeless dread.

On the evidence of yesterday's equivalent to a friendly fixture, Middlesbrough will be better equipped to dredge the most from the waters of so many wrecked holiday plans. In Keith O'Neill and Hamilton Ricard, a nascent attacking partnership is taking shape and now that the FA Carling Premiership table offers little to fear, a winter's weight has been lifted from their shoulders.

Gripes remain, however. Bryan Robson's reaction when the prospect of a working summer was mentioned was not so much gruff as growled. "I'm not bothered about that," the

if already contemplating a fortnight in Benidorm. Individually, Neil Sullivan appeared to have begun his journey. For both of Ricard's goals, the positional sense of the Scotland goalkeeper was suspect.

The first, after barely 30 seconds, was to effectively decide the result in Middlesbrough's favour. A purposeful kick from Mark Schwarzer was flicked on by Andy Townsend and Ricard hooked his shot above Sullivan's prone form.

Set-pieces and long-balls: the manner of Wimbledon's collapse was ironic. Ricard's chip in the 28th minute, racing on to a forward punt by Colin Cooper, took the Colombia forward's seasonal tally to 17, while there could be little excuse for the freedom that Gianluca Festa enjoyed to stoop and head home Townsend's corner at the far post.

Carl Cort, the Wimbledon substitute, summoned a fussy volley from a cross by Ceri Hughes, but it was a token gesture and never amounted to anything approaching a comeback.

MIDDLESBROUGH (3-5-2): M Schwarzer — C Cooper, G Parker, G Feels — R Stockdale (sub: S Vickers, 84min), R Munn — G Schofield, A Townsend, D Garton — H Ricard, K O'Neill (sub: N Middleton, 54). WIMBLEDON (4-4-2): N Sullivan — N Andley (sub: M Hughes, 88), C Perry, D Blackwell, B Thatcher — G Anonoff (sub: A Roberts, 45), J Eust, R Eadie, C Hughes — J Harrison (sub: C Cort, 66), M Gayle. Referee: P Durkin

Britain puts dog days firmly in the past

Alix Ramsay, Tennis

Correspondent, on

the rebirth of a once

great Davis Cup power



THERE comes a day in every young dog's life when he finally learns how to bark. At the time, it comes as a great shock, but once he has got the hang of it, there is no stopping him — no milkman or paperboy is safe. Over the Easter weekend, the Great Britain Davis Cup team learnt how to bark. It started as a quiet growl on Friday, as Tim Henman and Greg Rusedski silenced the 9,400 supporters at the National Indoor Arena by losing their opening singles, developed into a deep rumble on Saturday, as they won the doubles, and moved on to a full-throated roar as the tie went to the wire on Sunday night.

Britain lost, but only with the last four points of an enthralling, emotional occasion and what Henman, Rusedski and David Lloyd, their captain, achieved over those three days is worth more than ranking points, tournament titles and even a secure berth in the Davis Cup world group. With some superb tennis, more effort than seemed possible and a dose of sheer bloody-mindedness, they proved, once and for all, that they can compete with the big boys when it matters.

The old image of the awfully nice British chap doing rather well but not quite well enough evaporated after the first day. Henman looked devastated by his loss to Jim Courier on Friday. On Sunday, Rusedski looked worse. He had also fallen in five sets to the old campaigner and could not bear the thought that he had cost Britain the tie.

There was not much more that he could have done. Against Courier, a former world No 1 who has saved his nation's pride in Davis Cup more than once, it all came down to a couple of points here and there. Unfortunately, those points went to the American.

"This is the highest level of tennis that we've been a part of at a Davis Cup tie from start to finish," Courier said generously afterwards. "He knows what he is talking about. He has

played with the best against the best. "It was incredibly competitive and, really, just thrilling," he said. "This is as good as it gets. England is very lucky to have that in their first tie back in the world group. This is the type of match that gets a lot of kids wanting to play tennis tomorrow morning."

That must be the hope of the Lawn Tennis Association (LTA), which got it right over the weekend. The LTA was the perfect setting, big enough to be imposing but designed in such a way that every member of the crowd felt like they were a part of the action. It encouraged the youngsters to come in their hundreds, it provided banners and raffles and the spectators soon understood that in Davis Cup ties they are allowed to make noise.

"The thing which was nice was that you had such a diverse crowd," Rusedski said. "You had young kids there, it wasn't like your regular tennis supporter in Britain. It was a mixture of kids, people who play, people from different backgrounds. It made it nice and I think it is very important."

From the British perspective, this was the biggest tennis occasion in decades. Those who were lucky enough to be a part of it did their bit to support the team, but with BBC Television's live coverage attracting an audience of 7.8 million on Sunday evening, many more had a taste of the moment. What the LTA has to do now is seize that moment and build on it.

What Lloyd has to do is put the moment behind him and plan for the future. It took Lloyd three years to get Britain back into the world group and in a couple of days he will be able to assess his chances of keeping them there. On Thursday, Britain go into the draw for the relegation play-offs, to be held after the US Open in September.

In all, 16 countries will be vying for their place in the elite — the eight losers from the world group ties trying to stay put and the eight winners of the zonal competitions trying to move up. Britain should be seeded, but with vagaries of the procedure being a mystery to all, including Lloyd, we wait to see.

Whether the tie is at home or away depends on which country Britain is drawn against. If Britain played at home the last time that the countries met, the tie will be played away — and vice versa. If the countries have never met before, they go into a separate draw for home advantage. More importantly, the home team picks the playing surface and with such countries as Spain, Italy, Austria and Chile in the draw, that could mean a clay court, Henman and Rusedski's least favourite surface.

Still, that is for the players to deal with in September. For now, the fact remains that Lloyd's men may have lost the tie, but they have done more for British tennis in three days than anyone has managed in years.

"It has been a fantastic event," Lloyd said. "If we could have won, it would have been unbelievable, but it got a lot of people interested in tennis. It was real blood, sweat and tears. Now we have to get back up and fight again." If Henman and Rusedski can do again what they did in Birmingham, they will live to bark another day.

GOLF

Duval casts ethereal shadow over the Masters

FROM JOHN HOPKINS
GOLF CORRESPONDENT
IN AUGUSTA

MASTERS week 1999 is already different and we have only been here five minutes. Normally, after competitors have driven up Magnolia Lane to register their arrival at Augusta National Golf Club, there is good-natured talk about any number of subjects. This time, conversations have centred on David Duval and his stunning start to the year.

Less than 24 hours earlier, Duval had won his fourth tournament of the year and his second in succession and people are wondering whether he could add the 63rd Masters, which begins on Thursday. Actually, that is not strictly true. The talk was about Duval, as if he had become some deity, an ethereal presence hovering, unseen, over the proceedings.

"Has he arrived?" people wanted to know all yesterday morning. "When will he practice?" they asked. "Where is he staying?" The answer to these questions was "yes", "probably Tuesday" and "not known". Mitch Knox, his caddy, was the first to appear and then later Duval arrived to register. Surrounded by journalists and onlookers, he said: "I am excited. It's a big week and I am looking forward to it."

This did nothing to lessen the fevered speculation about Duval. 27, whose worst finish in a strokeplay event in 1999 is a tie for eighteenth.

"He definitely has something going on up there that no one else has," Jim Furyk, the United States Ryder Cup player, said.

"He's hotter than a firecracker right now," Fuzzy Zoeller said, and then ambled over to talk to John Daly, who is making his first appearance since pulling out of the Players Championship two weeks ago with a hip injury. At least Zoeller put Duval's most recent victory into some perspective, pointing out that on the 9th hole of his last round, Duval's drive had rebounded into the middle of the fairway from a tree — "Winner's luck," Zoeller said.

Thomas Bjorn and Patrick Sjöland tied off at 10.40am in a practice round yesterday, by which time Darren Clarke had completed the homeward nine and had the humping, but by no means unusual experience at this course, of chipping on to the 17th green and then promptly putting off it.

Shortly afterwards, Sergio Garcia, the amateur, began his first official practice round in the company of Severiano Ballesteros, his mentor and countryman, just ahead of a three-ball that comprised Gary Player, Charles Coody and Bob Charles. Tony Jacklin was practising his putting at one end of the putting green while Ian Woosnam was doing likewise at the other.

Lee Westwood arrived at the club and prepared to take his first look at Augusta this year. It is going to be hard to get past him, isn't it? Westwood said of Duval.

"He is certainly on a roll," Mark Calavecchia, the 1989 Open champion, said. "To win four tournaments in the Nineties is pretty good. To win four in one year before Augusta is fantastic."

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Shouting down calls to gild the Easter lily

By ROB HUGHES, CHIEF SPORTS WRITER

THE Easter sporting weekend was a double triumph for traditionalism. The Boat Race, 170 years old, resisted calls for significant reforms and Cambridge excelled — and the Davis Cup got exactly what it deserved in its centennial year, an engagement of mind, body and soul between players striving might and main and a crowd that came as close to audience participation as spectator sport can allow.

Thank goodness both rowing and tennis have a resistance to those who would tamper with their inherent designs. On the banks of the Thames, the University Boat Race drew its annual 200,000 followers, admitted to the occasion as much as to the sport. What is wrong with that? The race remains a magnet of fascination, the finish still the most clear example of ecstasy and despair in the sporting calendar.

The Davis Cup pitted Great

Britain against the United States, the originals, for the first time in 21 years. Inside the National Indoor Arena in Birmingham, 9,400 people, as many as this resonant hall can hold, spent three days, hour after intense hour, helping Tim Henman and Greg Rusedski to lift Britain, for the first time in living memory, to within an ace of the Americans.

Those who were not in the arena can only have gleaned through the keyhole of television the intensity of the combat and the compelling link between players and a crowd of all ages and classes.

It was draining, it was thrilling and it will leave a taste of the essence of sport long after the chocolate eggs have been forgotten. For both events, we have to thank people long dead who invented the competitions and thank those today who stand in the way of reformers.

Cricket is straining to sustain appeal in this country and, frighteningly, one heard over the Bank Holiday of administrators talking of quick-fix reforms to try to grab the attention of youth. The thinking appears to be that young people are looking for instant gratification, that they might not understand the conventions that have, through the passage of time, made men and women compete until they drop within a given framework of tried and trusted rules.

It is cheap nonsense, arrogance, to assume that our generation can reinvent the sport of our fathers and it risks losing the support of those who trust their sport and its heritage. Instant gratification? Plastic cups are instant and thrown away once used.

No one who experienced it will discard the memory of Birmingham on Easter Sunday. Henman,

undoubtedly Britain's star performer, was wrong when he stated that if his country lost, the weekend was wasted. No sir. It took a display of consummate excellence from Jim Courier to lay Britain's cause to rest. He beat Henman and Rusedski, outlasted them in spirit and, rather than buckle before a partisan crowd, relished the challenge.

There was no way you underestimate Jim's experience, his fortitude and his tenacity. Todd Martin, his compatriot, had said before the last, enthralling match. "There is no body you would rather have playing for you than Jim Courier and that is why you have professional

athletics — because in the arena, athletes can challenge themselves."

The essence of sport: athletes challenging, the audience riding that tightrope between nationalism and thoroughly legitimate involvement and all within rules invented a century ago. Behind the scenes, the International Tennis Federation, television broadcasters and sponsors meet to consider shortening matches from five sets to three, altering the scoring system as if a new, youthful generation cannot be taught to share the thrill.

The evidence of Easter 1999 belied that thirst for change: many a child stayed up beyond their bedtime and, whether they knew how to score tennis before they entered the arena or not, they mastered the rapid learning curve. Their shrill, persistent excitement — and some of us oldies, too — was locked in the engagement that allows ordinary people to share with gifted performers. A very happy Easter indeed.

Beware the hype when casting around for tackle

Brian Clarke says newcomers to the sport of flyfishing should shop sensibly and seek out expert advice

Citroën once produced a memorable series of advertisements for its get-in-with-a-fish-opener 2CV. They purported to equate that idiosyncratic jolopy with a range of top-flight cars. "How many wheels does a Rolls-Royce have? Four. How many wheels does a 2CV have? Four!" ... "Porsche put their parcel-shelves on the outside. With the 2CV, you get the parcel shelf on the inside!" Something like that. The way message each time was — why pay the difference?

The same question may be asked of any flyfisher looking for new equipment just now. A new trout season is upon us and the air is filled with the song of tackle-dealers pushing wheelbarrows to the bank.

Of course, we all got the Citroën

joke. The difference between a car at the bottom of a range and the top is usually obvious in looks and gliding in performance. The same is not true for the flyfisher. Rods, reels and the rest are designed to help an angler put his fly where he wants it and to hook effectively any fish hooked as a result.

Many a low-priced outfit will do that as well as top-priced kit and the actual rods may appear to be indistinguishable.

So why should anyone taking up fly-fishing this spring pay the difference in cost between the two? I can

think of no good reason. Astronomical prices are being asked today for tackle that incorporates minor and in some cases undetectable alleged advances. Many genuinely excellent American products sold here can be bought at a fraction of the price in

the United States. You could take a break in America to buy them and have the cost of the trip covered by the savings. In the meantime, rods that would perform brilliantly, though maybe without the cachet of a few well-typed names, go begging.

A fly fisherman on small streams will want a rod in the 7ft to 8ft range carrying maybe a four-weight line. An angler tackling larger rivers and many still waters will want something between 8ft and 9ft bins, carrying five-weight to seven-weight lines. For some lake fishing and angling for sea trout, rods of up to 10ft or a little more, carrying lines up to eight-weight or so, will be useful.

Large numbers of rods for all these purposes are priced at £400, £500 and more, while serviceable

outfits — rods, reels, lines, leaders and flies together — can be bought for two-thirds less. The rods I use for virtually all my own stream and river fishing cost £120 apiece — yet have had users of £500 rods gasp at the silken ease with which each puts out a line. My favourite wet-fly rod for lakes cost me £25 second-hand and its original owner £70 new. When I wanted a salmon two-hander, I sought advice from a brilliant salmon angler. What did he recommend out of all the rods available, most of which he had tried? Why, the same rod he uses himself — a Japanese product costing £300 new, which I picked up second-hand for £200. It performs like a dream.

The reality is that few rods and anglers are born for one another. Often enough, we buy a rod that

feels good in the hand. If, having bought it, the rod shows a less-than-fatal quirk, we tend to fish on and adjust to it. More often than not, the rod we fish with ends up becoming the rod we know and learn to love.

It is the same with fly reels. Plenty of reels now come in at between £250 and £400 — a few at even more. I have never spent more than £80 and the two of that price I do own both incorporate superb disc drags. Many expert flyfishers are wedded to reels that cost between £30 and £40 apiece.

On the high-priced options, this or that gizmo justifies a little extra cost and hype delivers the rest. Statements like "the days are long gone when a reel was regarded largely as a place to store line" are now heard repeatedly — and are

wrong. The prime function of a reel will always be to store and, of course, dispense and recover line. The essential qualities — lightness, reliability and an exposed rim — cost very little in themselves.

In truth, the rod has not yet been priced that will turn an indifferent caster into a good caster and no outfit has been assembled that will make up for a lack of fishing skills. Unless the angler knows the value of a cautious approach to the water, can read the currents, knows where a fish is likely to lie and can present the right fly in such a way that it comes to his quarry's attention naturally, every penny spent on any rod will be money down the drain.

None of this is to say that much expensive tackle is not superb or that good tackle will not give a

good fisherman an edge: simply that expensive tackle will not necessarily be good tackle and that quite superb gear can be had at a very modest price. Telling the difference in the shop or in the catalogue is, of course, the problem.

For the angler who can be persuaded that he needs the most expensive in anything and can afford it, the issue is neither here nor there. For many more — and especially glibly newcomers confronted by honey-tongued salesmen — the issue is often central. My

advice to anyone starting up is to seek independent, experienced advice if he or she can and, if they cannot, then to buy modestly and spend anything extra on tuition.

□ Brian Clarke's next column will appear on Monday, May 3

'Fishing skills are what matter'

'No rod will make a good caster'

A time of trials and tribulations

Racing is hardly short of bonfires to spark the imagination, yet few can match the one ignited by Crispin Head as he revelled in Juvenia's Prix Marcel Bouscass triumph in October. The French trainer had just seen Juvenia repel all comers in a principal 1,000 Guineas pointer before she announced all and sundry: "Ah, but I have one better at home."

This is often an attention-seeking play employed after a two-year-old has just skated up to send bookmakers scurrying for their mobile phones. More often than not, the anonymous "one at home" subsequently fails to cope with the stable's lurcher. However, Madame Head's reputation is not to be trifled with. No sooner had she identified the filly in question than Moiaiva was immediately installed among the favourites for the 1,000 Guineas. The trainer's reputation — and that of her filly — are firmly on the line when Moiaiva reappears at Maisons-Laffitte on Friday.

At this early stage Moiaiva merits plenty of attention. Almost as impeccably connected as her trainer, she's a daughter of Bering and the Nureyev mare Moina Stilla, already dam of the talented Special Quest. Remarkably, some perceive her sire, Bering, to be a weak link, even though he spent his early stallion years in Kentucky — and thus under-represented on the European turf that plainly suits his progeny. There will be plenty of classics who cannot boast a pair of Guineas winners in their lineage, but the outstanding Pommery, as Bering can.

Moiaiva is unbeaten in two starts, latterly when fending off Restless War, himself an intended runner in the 2,000

JULIAN MUSCAT



On the level

Guineas at Newmarket. If her class is evident, a detail as yet unresolved for punters is her tractability. She made all to account for Restless War and the intention to run a pacemaker on Friday suggests that Moiaiva can be headstrong. This is certainly not a trait favourable to her prospects at Newmarket, where free-running 1,000 Guineas winners are rare.

At least Moiaiva faces a meaningful test, with Blue Cloud — like Restless War, trained by André Fabre — among her opponents. A half-sister to the champion miller, Bigstone, Blue Cloud finished just inches behind Juvenia in the Marcel Bouscass, and thus offers the perfect yardstick by which to measure Madame Head's assessment of Moiaiva. Blue Cloud is also bound for the fillies' classic at Newmarket, for which she has been well supported in recent days. Both fillies are reported to have thrived over the winter.

Those searching for clues to the outcome of the 1,000 Guineas should pay close attention to the eve-of-Grand National trial. The French test will be the most competitive of them all, unless, of course, you happen to have access to the Godolphin gallops in Dubai this weekend. Of the ten fillies quoted at 16-1 or less, no less than five are resident at Al Quoz — among them Calando,

as reliable a limousine to juvenile form as there was last season. For all their mystique, Godolphin's private trials rapidly become public knowledge as bookmakers take evasive action from the weight of money guided by their outcome. With the likes of Sayarrow, Edizaz, Kareemah and Kiting to call on, it will be surprising if Calando emerges as Godolphin's front-line candidate.

One filly who appealed as a live 1,000 Guineas candidate after her victory on Saturday is Claxon — who was promptly ruled out of the equation by her trainer, John Dunlop. Claxon, bred clear away from Alabab, her stablemate who finished fourth in the group one Fillies' Mile in September, Dunlop prefers eschewing Newmarket in favour of an Oaks bid which, through less-measured thought, was the campaign embarked on by her dam, Bulaxie.

Withdrawn from the 1,000 Guineas through injury, Bulaxie started favourite for the 1994 Oaks after winning decisively at Goodwood. Bulaxie's problem was her lack of tractability. A nervy filly, she would not settle sufficiently to assess whether she stayed 12 furlongs; hence Dunlop's post-race dilemma when dealing with Claxon's stamina.

What was not broached in respect of Claxon was the fact that Dunlop trained Edizaz until she was poached by Godolphin in October. Perhaps Dunlop's reluctance to go to Newmarket with an apparently legitimate contender is based on what he saw of the two fillies on the gallops last year. The guessing game goes on.

Julian Muscat writes on Flat racing every Tuesday



Calando is among the Godolphin team being prepared for the 1,000 Guineas

Injured Bradley likely to miss Grand National

By Alan Lee, Racing Correspondent

THE vanquishing of British hopes was painful and absolute at Fairyhouse yesterday. The finish of the Jameson Irish National was fought out exclusively by home-trained horses and, while trainer Michael O'Brien celebrated his third win in the event with Glebe Lad, jockey Graham Bradley was taken to hospital after dislocating his shoulder.

For Bradley, whose mount Righasaidred fell three out, the timing could not be worse. In the Martell Grand National on Saturday, he is scheduled to ride Sunny Bay, runner-up for the past two years, but he is not optimistic about his chances of being fit in time. "I am feeling very sore," Bradley said last night. "I will be staying over in Ireland tonight as I am much too uncomfortable to travel at the moment. Hopefully I will see a specialist first thing tomorrow morning and we'll take it from there but things are not looking good."

Life has dealt some dreadful cards to O'Brien, who manages his operation on the Curragh from a wheelchair, but he long ago demonstrated his shrewdness and he had been openly optimistic about Glebe Lad's prospects. Even O'Brien's confidence must have been dashed as Feathered Leader cruised past his horse to jump the last in front but Glebe Lad rallied stoically under Tommy Rudd to take the race by three lengths.

Kempton's Flat card, which featured doubles for jockeys Kieren Fallon and Olivier Peslier, was overshadowed by

serious injury to John Reid, 43, who broke his right leg after a fall from Dover House during the Magnolia Stakes when a stirrup snapped.

Meanwhile, Reid's intended mount, Monsajem, was third in the principal race, the Coral Rosebery Stakes, won by Jimmy Fortune aboard Carry The Flag for trainer Paul Cole.

Martin Pipe made a minor inroads into a rare deficit in the National Hunt trainers' championship. His four win-

BIG-RACE DETAILS

JAMESON IRISH GRAND NATIONAL

1. GLEBE LAD (P. Rudd, 8-1 fav), 2. Feathered Leader (C. O'Brien, 12-1), 3. Mania The Man (J. P. Taylor, 8-1 fav), 4. Risk Of Thunder (J. P. Taylor, 12-1), 5. ALDO RAN (P. Rudd, 8-1 fav), 6. The Quads (P. Rudd, 8-1 fav), 7. Bob Tracy (P. Rudd, 8-1 fav), 8. Righasaidred (P. Rudd, 8-1 fav), 9. Full Of Oats (P. Rudd, 8-1 fav), 10. Rocketts Castle (P. Rudd, 8-1 fav), 11. Ultra Ruler (P. Rudd, 8-1 fav), 12. Ultra Ruler (P. Rudd, 8-1 fav), 13. Ultra Ruler (P. Rudd, 8-1 fav), 14. Ultra Ruler (P. Rudd, 8-1 fav), 15. Ultra Ruler (P. Rudd, 8-1 fav), 16. Ultra Ruler (P. Rudd, 8-1 fav), 17. Ultra Ruler (P. Rudd, 8-1 fav), 18. Ultra Ruler (P. Rudd, 8-1 fav), 19. Ultra Ruler (P. Rudd, 8-1 fav), 20. Ultra Ruler (P. Rudd, 8-1 fav), 21. Ultra Ruler (P. Rudd, 8-1 fav), 22. Ultra Ruler (P. Rudd, 8-1 fav), 23. Ultra Ruler (P. Rudd, 8-1 fav), 24. Ultra Ruler (P. Rudd, 8-1 fav), 25. Ultra Ruler (P. Rudd, 8-1 fav), 26. Ultra Ruler (P. Rudd, 8-1 fav), 27. Ultra Ruler (P. Rudd, 8-1 fav), 28. Ultra Ruler (P. 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Chris McGrath watches an historic day unfold at Wincanton

Dunwoody makes up the numbers

IARD DUNWOODY became the most successful National Hunt jockey riding the 167th win of his career at Wincanton today, but insisted that the road remains distant on the horizon. Nonetheless, the landmark he passed yesterday had undoubtedly become a significant destination in itself.

Of course, his craving for Peaseholm's all-time National Hunt record feeds upon a obsessive streak that drives him against the odds of time and injury. He is now in the sauna to combat his weight and is sedulously avoiding any further exertion. However, he is currently hampered by muscle damage to his right arm. But he refuses to entertain the thought that he has found an auspicious partner in his quest for a third Martell Grand National at Aintree on Saturday, when he rides Call It A Day. "Hopefully there will be only more winners over the next few years," he said, "here I have to be, because

otherwise it won't be long before a certain A.P. McCoy passes us," he said.

The usual festive holiday throng was further condensed by Dunwoody's arrival at Wincanton, one short of Scudamore's total and with five strongly fancied rides for Paul Nicholls, the season's leading trainer. Though My Man Dan had not read the script and unprompted beat Estate Agent, the odds-on favourite for the

the conclusion lustily demanded by the crowd.

Dunwoody was singularly undemonstrative passing the post, and though he managed a very passable "flying dismount", à la Frankie Dettori, he seemed intent on savouring the moment with the dignity and self-possession that have been his nearly constant companions during the past two decades.

He received an embrace from his parents, a mugshot of champagne from the racecourse, a warm shake of the hand from Scudamore, and a couple of hundred autograph requests — not one of which he turned down. His breeches smeared green and brown by his fall, he said: "We have had our ups and downs but it's great for the crowd that has supported me through the day that we got there in the end."

"They gave me a brilliant reception and I would have felt I had let them down if I hadn't done it. Yes, this is a priority for me at the beginning of the season, but I still have plenty to keep me going for a start, it would be nice if I could finish in the top three in the title race again. After 25,000 miles over hurdles and fences, with the odd bumper in between, it's a great moment, especially with my mother, father and sister here."

Scudamore declared himself honoured to pass on his record to "the ultimate professional". He said: "People can't understand it, but I don't feel sad or bitter. I'm genuinely delighted for Richard. He has got everything, but the thing that sets him apart from all the others is his determination and courage. There are lots and lots of good riders, but to do what he has done you need that mental toughness."



Dunwoody, left, is congratulated by Scudamore after passing his record yesterday

"Not many people know what he has been through to achieve this — Stan Mellor, John Francombe and myself have some idea — and it's a quite magnificent record. You may get more publicity and earn more money in some other sports, but I don't think anyone has ever worked harder in sport. He is a truly great man of sport."

Francombe, who bowed out with 1,138 winners in 1985, said: "What he has done is like

winning four gold medals. He gives 100 per cent and hates getting beaten. You never see him give one a bad ride."

Stan Mellor, the first jockey to ride over a thousand winners in 1971 with Ouzo, also paid tribute to Dunwoody: "Richard's a classic, a master jockey and rides with tremendous authority. It's a terrible argument to say who is the best, but Richard will have to be one of the all-time greats."

Nicholls likewise paid tribute to Dunwoody's "professionalism in everything he does". The trainer said: "A lot of people have talent but don't know how to use it, they lack that extra commitment. It's one thing being able to ride but another being able to put it all together. He's a top man." So much so, that his colleagues call him The Prince. For all his grace in the saddle, however, his secret remains that he rides with the hunger of a pauper.

Tomorrow in Interface: How to bet on the Grand National via the Internet

first, Knight Templar did chivalrous service in the novice chase. Bucksland Cameo finished second, however, and so did Dunwoody after a cannaught Cracker fell in front of the stands on the first circuit of the handicap chase. He jogged back to the weighing room, however, and Yorkshire Edition, though idling in the season, but it still has plenty to keep me going for a start, it would be nice if I could finish in the top three in the title race again. After 25,000 miles over hurdles and fences, with the odd bumper in between, it's a great moment, especially with my mother, father and sister here."

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ROB WRIGHT

10 New Victoria 3.40 Kosovo
 40 Gold Chance 4.10 Artistic Courier
 10 Killamey Jazz 4.40 Busting Bird

leamarket Correspondent: 2.40 Gold Chance.
 10 Killamey Jazz. 4.10 ARTIC COURIER (nap).

ONE: STANDARD DRAW: NO ADVANTAGE SIS

2.10 KING ARTHUR MEDIAN AUCTION MAIDEN STAKES (3.0.22.264: 70) (10 runners)

1-80 CUMBERLAND BLUE 3.17 Country 9-0 ... K Fallon 2
 2-80 DEXAL 12 (7) A. J. Jones 9-0 ... M Tabor 7
 3-80 WALTER PLUM 13.4 C. Williams 9-0 ... M Tabor 7
 4-80 DUNSTON BLISS 15.1 W. L. Jones 9-0 ... T. M. Smith 10
 5-80 GREY MAVER 27.1 C. Williams 9-0 ... M Tabor 7
 6-80 ICE PAK 16.1 H. H. H. 9-0 ... M Tabor 7
 7-80 NEW VICTORIA 3.17 Country 9-0 ... K Fallon 2
 8-80 TREASURE COVE 16.1 H. H. H. 9-0 ... M Tabor 7
 9-80 TREASURE COVE 16.1 H. H. H. 9-0 ... M Tabor 7
 10-80 TREASURE COVE 16.1 H. H. H. 9-0 ... M Tabor 7

1-80 New Victoria 3.40 Kosovo
 40 Gold Chance 4.10 Artistic Courier
 10 Killamey Jazz 4.40 Busting Bird

2.40 GALAHAD CLAIMING STAKES (€2,082: 50) (9)

1-80 CRYSTAL LOVER 3.17 H. H. H. 9-0 ... K Fallon 2
 2-80 GOLD CHANCE 4.10 Artistic Courier
 3-80 KILLAMEY JAZZ 4.40 Busting Bird
 4-80 NEW VICTORIA 3.17 Country 9-0 ... K Fallon 2
 5-80 TREASURE COVE 16.1 H. H. H. 9-0 ... M Tabor 7
 6-80 ICE PAK 16.1 H. H. H. 9-0 ... M Tabor 7
 7-80 DEXAL 12 (7) A. J. Jones 9-0 ... M Tabor 7
 8-80 WALTER PLUM 13.4 C. Williams 9-0 ... M Tabor 7
 9-80 DUNSTON BLISS 15.1 W. L. Jones 9-0 ... T. M. Smith 10

3.10 PERCEVAL HANDICAP (€2,853: 1m) (14)

1-80 CRYSTAL LOVER 3.17 H. H. H. 9-0 ... K Fallon 2
 2-80 GOLD CHANCE 4.10 Artistic Courier
 3-80 KILLAMEY JAZZ 4.40 Busting Bird
 4-80 NEW VICTORIA 3.17 Country 9-0 ... K Fallon 2
 5-80 TREASURE COVE 16.1 H. H. H. 9-0 ... M Tabor 7
 6-80 ICE PAK 16.1 H. H. H. 9-0 ... M Tabor 7
 7-80 DEXAL 12 (7) A. J. Jones 9-0 ... M Tabor 7
 8-80 WALTER PLUM 13.4 C. Williams 9-0 ... M Tabor 7
 9-80 DUNSTON BLISS 15.1 W. L. Jones 9-0 ... T. M. Smith 10

3.40 LANCELOT CLASSIFIED STAKES (€2,306: 70) (16)

1-80 CRYSTAL LOVER 3.17 H. H. H. 9-0 ... K Fallon 2
 2-80 GOLD CHANCE 4.10 Artistic Courier
 3-80 KILLAMEY JAZZ 4.40 Busting Bird
 4-80 NEW VICTORIA 3.17 Country 9-0 ... K Fallon 2
 5-80 TREASURE COVE 16.1 H. H. H. 9-0 ... M Tabor 7
 6-80 ICE PAK 16.1 H. H. H. 9-0 ... M Tabor 7
 7-80 DEXAL 12 (7) A. J. Jones 9-0 ... M Tabor 7
 8-80 WALTER PLUM 13.4 C. Williams 9-0 ... M Tabor 7
 9-80 DUNSTON BLISS 15.1 W. L. Jones 9-0 ... T. M. Smith 10

4.10 HOLY GRAIL APPRENTICES SELLING STAKES (€1,787: 1m 40) (7)

1-80 CRYSTAL LOVER 3.17 H. H. H. 9-0 ... K Fallon 2
 2-80 GOLD CHANCE 4.10 Artistic Courier
 3-80 KILLAMEY JAZZ 4.40 Busting Bird
 4-80 NEW VICTORIA 3.17 Country 9-0 ... K Fallon 2
 5-80 TREASURE COVE 16.1 H. H. H. 9-0 ... M Tabor 7
 6-80 ICE PAK 16.1 H. H. H. 9-0 ... M Tabor 7
 7-80 DEXAL 12 (7) A. J. Jones 9-0 ... M Tabor 7

4.40 EXCALIBUR HANDICAP (€3,400: 1m 30) (9)

1-80 CRYSTAL LOVER 3.17 H. H. H. 9-0 ... K Fallon 2
 2-80 GOLD CHANCE 4.10 Artistic Courier
 3-80 KILLAMEY JAZZ 4.40 Busting Bird
 4-80 NEW VICTORIA 3.17 Country 9-0 ... K Fallon 2
 5-80 TREASURE COVE 16.1 H. H. H. 9-0 ... M Tabor 7
 6-80 ICE PAK 16.1 H. H. H. 9-0 ... M Tabor 7
 7-80 DEXAL 12 (7) A. J. Jones 9-0 ... M Tabor 7
 8-80 WALTER PLUM 13.4 C. Williams 9-0 ... M Tabor 7
 9-80 DUNSTON BLISS 15.1 W. L. Jones 9-0 ... T. M. Smith 10

COURSE SPECIALISTS

1-80 CRYSTAL LOVER 3.17 H. H. H. 9-0 ... K Fallon 2
 2-80 GOLD CHANCE 4.10 Artistic Courier
 3-80 KILLAMEY JAZZ 4.40 Busting Bird
 4-80 NEW VICTORIA 3.17 Country 9-0 ... K Fallon 2
 5-80 TREASURE COVE 16.1 H. H. H. 9-0 ... M Tabor 7
 6-80 ICE PAK 16.1 H. H. H. 9-0 ... M Tabor 7
 7-80 DEXAL 12 (7) A. J. Jones 9-0 ... M Tabor 7
 8-80 WALTER PLUM 13.4 C. Williams 9-0 ... M Tabor 7
 9-80 DUNSTON BLISS 15.1 W. L. Jones 9-0 ... T. M. Smith 10

RACING AHEAD

MARTELL GRAND NATIONAL
 Aintree, April 10

GUIDE TO THE LEADING PRICES

Double Thriller
 Addington Boy
 Call It A Day
 Exotic
 Fiddling The Facts
 General Wolfe
 Nathaniel Lead
 Sunny Bay
 Belmont King
 Earth Summit
 Baronet
 Coombe Hill

ROUGH QUEST, the 1998 winner, and Senior El Bezzetti were the only notable absenteees yesterday's five-day entry stage for the Martell Grand National, at which 36 stood their ground. With Double Thriller having been out to a ridiculously short price after finishing fourth in the Cheltenham Gold Cup, there is plenty of value left in the race.

The most important factor to weight up at the moment is the going. Described as soft, good to soft in places, with it dry out in time for the test ground horses to have a chance? There are some showmen's forecasts today, but the remainder of the week should be dry and there is every chance that the fast-drying Aintree course will have genuinely good ground by Saturday. With that in mind, Addington Boy, Baronet, Belmont King and Coombe Hill are the ones most likely to shorten in the market before Saturday.

Addington Boy, a useful chaser two years ago when trained by Gordon Richards, spent last season in the wilderness but has returned to form since joining Paddy Murphy, finishing a respectable fifth in the Gold Cup. He has claims, but has yet to prove himself over such an extreme distance.

Baronet has no such stamina doubts, having won the Scottish Grand National at Ayr last season. He disappointed on unsuitably soft ground in the Midlands National at Uttoxeter last time, but more of a worry is his tendency to make jumping errors. The same applies to Belmont King, the previous Scottish National winner, for when leading Irish rider Ruby Walsh has been booked.

Coombe Hill, winner of the Hennessy at Newbury in 1998, only made it to the course twice last season, but proved that he retains plenty of ability when winning on unsuitably soft ground on his reappearance at Ascot. He has been unable to cope with heavy going on this past two starts, in the Hennessy and King George, but is undoubtedly in good shape again now. He has been schooled over Nationalist's fences at home by his big-race partner, Steve Wynn, and has the necessary touch of class to win the National. At 25-1, with Liekeberg, COOMBE HILL makes plenty of each-way appeal.

ROB WRIGHT

2.00 Marsh Marigold 3.30 Tremalt
 2.30 Tombola 4.00 Dawokil
 3.00 Titan Thai 4.30 Oriental Boy
 Carl Evans: 2.30 Tombola.

GOING: GOOD TO SOFT (SOFT IN PLACES)
TOTE JACKPOT MEETING

2.20 SPOTON NOVICES HANDICAP HURDLE (€2,715: 2m) (16 runners)

1-80 CRYSTAL LOVER 3.17 H. H. H. 9-0 ... K Fallon 2
 2-80 GOLD CHANCE 4.10 Artistic Courier
 3-80 KILLAMEY JAZZ 4.40 Busting Bird
 4-80 NEW VICTORIA 3.17 Country 9-0 ... K Fallon 2
 5-80 TREASURE COVE 16.1 H. H. H. 9-0 ... M Tabor 7
 6-80 ICE PAK 16.1 H. H. H. 9-0 ... M Tabor 7
 7-80 DEXAL 12 (7) A. J. Jones 9-0 ... M Tabor 7
 8-80 WALTER PLUM 13.4 C. Williams 9-0 ... M Tabor 7
 9-80 DUNSTON BLISS 15.1 W. L. Jones 9-0 ... T. M. Smith 10

4.30 C.J. PEARCE NOVICES HANDICAP CHASE (€4,514: 2m 50) (11)

1-80 CRYSTAL LOVER 3.17 H. H. H. 9-0 ... K Fallon 2
 2-80 GOLD CHANCE 4.10 Artistic Courier
 3-80 KILLAMEY JAZZ 4.40 Busting Bird
 4-80 NEW VICTORIA 3.17 Country 9-0 ... K Fallon 2
 5-80 TREASURE COVE 16.1 H. H. H. 9-0 ... M Tabor 7
 6-80 ICE PAK 16.1 H. H. H. 9-0 ... M Tabor 7
 7-80 DEXAL 12 (7) A. J. Jones 9-0 ... M Tabor 7
 8-80 WALTER PLUM 13.4 C. Williams 9-0 ... M Tabor 7
 9-80 DUNSTON BLISS 15.1 W. L. Jones 9-0 ... T. M. Smith 10

2.30 MOUNT ARGUS HUNTERS CHASE (€1,593: 2m 70) (16)

1-80 CRYSTAL LOVER 3.17 H. H. H. 9-0 ... K Fallon 2
 2-80 GOLD CHANCE 4.10 Artistic Courier
 3-80 KILLAMEY JAZZ 4.40 Busting Bird
 4-80 NEW VICTORIA 3.17 Country 9-0 ... K Fallon 2
 5-80 TREASURE COVE 16.1 H. H. H. 9-0 ... M Tabor 7
 6-80 ICE PAK 16.1 H. H. H. 9-0 ... M Tabor 7
 7-80 DEXAL 12 (7) A. J. Jones 9-0 ... M Tabor 7
 8-80 WALTER PLUM 13.4 C. Williams 9-0 ... M Tabor 7
 9-80 DUNSTON BLISS 15.1 W. L. Jones 9-0 ... T. M. Smith 10

3.00 DRAUGHT BASS SELLING HANDICAP CHASE (€2,208: 3m) (18)

1-80 CRYSTAL LOVER 3.17 H. H. H. 9-0 ... K Fallon 2
 2-80 GOLD CHANCE 4.10 Artistic Courier
 3-80 KILLAMEY JAZZ 4.40 Busting Bird
 4-80 NEW VICTORIA 3.17 Country 9-0 ... K Fallon 2
 5-80 TREASURE COVE 16.1 H. H. H. 9-0 ... M Tabor 7
 6-80 ICE PAK 16.1 H. H. H. 9-0 ... M Tabor 7
 7-80 DEXAL 12 (7) A. J. Jones 9-0 ... M Tabor 7
 8-80 WALTER PLUM 13.4 C. Williams 9-0 ... M Tabor 7
 9-80 DUNSTON BLISS 15.1 W. L. Jones 9-0 ... T. M. Smith 10

WETHERBY

ROB WRIGHT

2.20 Royal Castle (nb) 3.50 Spirit Of Steel
 2.50 Queensway 4.20 Trade Dispute
 3.20 Siberian Mystic 4.50 CORAL ISLAND (nap)

Timekeeper's top rating: 2.20 FOREVER NOBLE.

Carl Evans: 4.20 Trade Dispute.

READING THE RACECARD

2.20 BENFIELD FORD NOVICES HURDLE (€3,436: 2m 40) (11 runners)

1-80 CRYSTAL LOVER 3.17 H. H. H. 9-0 ... K Fallon 2
 2-80 GOLD CHANCE 4.10 Artistic Courier
 3-80 KILLAMEY JAZZ 4.40 Busting Bird
 4-80 NEW VICTORIA 3.17 Country 9-0 ... K Fallon 2
 5-80 TREASURE COVE 16.1 H. H. H. 9-0 ... M Tabor 7
 6-80 ICE PAK 16.1 H. H. H. 9-0 ... M Tabor 7
 7-80 DEXAL 12 (7) A. J. Jones 9-0 ... M Tabor 7
 8-80 WALTER PLUM 13.4 C. Williams 9-0 ... M Tabor 7
 9-80 DUNSTON BLISS 15.1 W. L. Jones 9-0 ... T. M. Smith 10

2.50 MARK COCKER HANDICAP CHASE (€3,353: 2m) (11 runners)

1-80 CRYSTAL LOVER 3.17 H. H. H. 9-0 ... K Fallon 2
 2-80 GOLD CHANCE 4.10 Artistic Courier
 3-80 KILLAMEY JAZZ 4.40 Busting Bird
 4-80 NEW VICTORIA 3.17 Country 9-0 ... K Fallon 2
 5-80 TREASURE COVE 16.1 H. H. H. 9-0 ... M Tabor 7
 6-80 ICE PAK 16.1 H. H. H. 9-0 ... M Tabor 7
 7-80 DEXAL 12 (7) A. J. Jones 9-0 ... M Tabor 7
 8-80 WALTER PLUM 13.4 C. Williams 9-0 ... M Tabor 7
 9-80 DUNSTON BLISS 15.1 W. L. Jones 9-0 ... T. M. Smith 10

3.20 TITE HURDLE (SHOWCASE HANDICAP) (€5,582: 2m 40) (9 runners)

1-80 CRYSTAL LOVER 3.17 H. H. H. 9-0 ... K Fallon 2
 2-80 GOLD CHANCE 4.10 Artistic Courier
 3-80 KILLAMEY JAZZ 4.40 Busting Bird
 4-80 NEW VICTORIA 3.17 Country 9-0 ... K Fallon 2
 5-80 TREASURE COVE 16.1 H. H. H. 9-0 ... M Tabor 7
 6-80 ICE PAK 16.1 H. H. H. 9-0 ... M Tabor 7
 7-80 DEXAL 12 (7) A. J. Jones 9-0 ... M Tabor 7
 8-80 WALTER PLUM 13.4 C. Williams 9-0 ... M Tabor 7
 9-80 DUNSTON BLISS 15.1 W. L. Jones 9-0 ... T. M. Smith 10

3.50 WETHERBY LONG DISTANCE NOVICES HANDICAP CHASE (€3,842: 3m 50) (11 runners)

1-80 CRYSTAL LOVER 3.17 H. H. H. 9-0 ... K Fallon 2
 2-80 GOLD CHANCE 4.10 Artistic Courier
 3-80 KILLAMEY JAZZ 4.40 Busting Bird
 4-80 NEW VICTORIA 3.17 Country 9-0 ... K Fallon 2
 5-80 TREASURE COVE 16.1 H. H. H. 9-0 ... M Tabor 7
 6-80 ICE PAK 16.1 H. H. H. 9-0 ... M Tabor 7
 7-80 DEXAL 12 (7) A. J. Jones 9-0 ... M Tabor 7
 8-80 WALTER PLUM 13.4 C. Williams 9-0 ... M Tabor 7
 9-80 DUNSTON BLISS 15.1 W. L. Jones 9-0 ... T. M. Smith 10

4.20 HOWARD BROWN MEMORIAL NOVICES HUNTERS CHASE (€1,204: 3m 10) (8 runners)

1-80 CRYSTAL LOVER 3.17 H. H. H. 9-0 ... K Fallon 2
 2-80 GOLD CHANCE 4.10 Artistic Courier
 3-80 KILLAMEY JAZZ 4.40 Busting Bird
 4-80 NEW VICTORIA 3.17 Country 9-0 ... K Fallon 2
 5-80 TREASURE COVE 16.1 H. H. H. 9-0 ... M Tabor 7
 6-80 ICE PAK 16.1 H. H. H. 9-0 ... M Tabor 7
 7-80 DEXAL 12 (7) A. J. Jones 9-0 ... M Tabor 7
 8-80 WALTER PLUM 13.4 C. Williams 9-0 ... M Tabor 7

4.50 SANDBECK MOTORS HANDICAP HURDLE (€2,916: 2m) (9 runners)

1-80 CRYSTAL LOVER 3.17 H. H. H. 9-0 ... K Fallon 2
 2-80 GOLD CHANCE 4.10 Artistic Courier
 3-80 KILLAMEY JAZZ 4.40 Busting Bird
 4-80 NEW VICTORIA 3.17 Country 9-0 ... K Fallon 2
 5-80 TREASURE COVE 16.1 H. H. H. 9-0 ... M Tabor 7
 6-80 ICE PAK 16.1 H. H. H. 9-0 ... M Tabor 7
 7-80 DEXAL 12 (7) A. J. Jones 9-0 ... M Tabor 7
 8-80 WALTER PLUM 13.4 C. Williams 9-0 ... M Tabor 7
 9-80 DUNSTON BLISS 15.1 W. L. Jones 9-0 ... T. M. Smith 10

5.00 CAFFEYS IRISH ALE MAIDEN HURDLE (€2,820: 2m) (16)

1-80 CRYSTAL LOVER 3.17 H. H. H. 9-0 ... K Fallon 2
 2-80 GOLD CHANCE 4.10 Artistic Courier
 3-80 KILLAMEY JAZZ 4.40 Busting Bird
 4-80 NEW VICTORIA 3.17 Country 9-0 ... K Fallon 2
 5-80 TREASURE COVE 16.1 H. H. H. 9-0 ... M Tabor 7
 6-80 ICE PAK 16.1 H. H. H. 9-0 ... M Tabor 7
 7-80 DEXAL 12 (7) A. J. Jones 9-0 ... M Tabor 7
 8-80 WALTER PLUM 13.4 C. Williams 9-0 ... M Tabor 7
 9-80 DUNSTON BLISS 15.1 W. L. Jones 9-0 ... T. M. Smith 10

COURSE SPECIALISTS

1-80 CRYSTAL LOVER 3.17 H. H. H. 9-0 ... K Fallon 2
 2-80 GOLD CHANCE 4.10 Artistic Courier
 3-80 KILLAMEY JAZZ 4.40 Busting Bird
 4-80 NEW VICTORIA 3.17 Country 9-0 ... K Fallon 2
 5-80 TREASURE COVE 16.1 H. H. H. 9-0 ... M Tabor 7
 6-80 ICE PAK 16.1 H. H. H. 9-0 ... M Tabor 7
 7-80 DEXAL 12 (7) A. J. Jones 9-0 ... M Tabor 7
 8-80 WALTER PLUM 13.4 C. Williams 9-0 ... M Tabor 7
 9-80 DUNSTON BLISS 15.1 W. L. Jones 9-0 ... T. M. Smith 10

TRAINERS

1-80 CRYSTAL LOVER 3.17 H. H. H. 9-0 ... K Fallon 2
 2-80 GOLD CHANCE 4.10 Artistic Courier
 3-80 KILLAMEY JAZZ 4.40 Busting Bird
 4-80 NEW VICTORIA 3.17 Country 9-0 ... K Fallon 2
 5-80 TREASURE COVE 16.1 H. H. H. 9-0 ... M Tabor 7
 6-80 ICE PAK 16.1 H. H. H. 9-0 ... M Tabor 7
 7-80 DEXAL 12 (7) A. J. Jones 9-0 ... M Tabor 7
 8-80 WALTER PLUM 13.4 C. Williams 9-0 ... M Tabor 7
 9-80 DUNSTON BLISS 15.1 W. L. Jones 9-0 ... T. M. Smith 10

JOCKEYS

1-80 CRYSTAL LOVER 3.17 H. H. H. 9-0 ... K Fallon 2
 2-80 GOLD CHANCE 4.10 Artistic Courier
 3-80 KILLAMEY JAZZ 4.40 Busting Bird
 4-80 NEW VICTORIA 3.17 Country 9-0 ... K Fallon 2
 5-80 TREASURE COVE 16.1 H. H. H. 9-0 ... M Tabor 7
 6-80 ICE PAK 16.1 H. H. H. 9-0 ... M Tabor 7
 7-80 DEXAL 12 (7) A. J. Jones 9-0 ... M Tabor 7
 8-80 WALTER PLUM 13.4 C. Williams 9-0 ... M Tabor 7
 9-80 DUNSTON BLISS 15.1 W. L. Jones 9-0 ... T. M. Smith 10

Johnston excels at Newcastle

MARK JOHNSTON swept aside any notion that his string is out of sorts with a 92-1 treble at Newcastle yesterday. Several of the trainer's runners had disappointed over the weekend but the Middeham yard was back in peak form as Tiler, Royal Rebel and Doonaree obliged.

The new owner, Doonaree, was the most impressive of the Johnston winners, travelling well and quickening smoothly under Darryll Holland to defeat the favourite, Fnan, in the Sarah Jane Anderson Maiden Stakes.

Doonaree, a son of the leading sire Sadler's Wells, cost 200,000 guineas when bought for owner Martin Burke at Coffs Sales.

MEETING POINTS

THE TIMES GUIDE TO THE GOING TODAY

WETHERBY
 Jumps, 6-race card
 1st race: 2.20
 Winning favourite: 42.5%

SOUTHWELL
 Flat, 6-race card
 1st race: 2.10
 Winning favourite: 33.6%

UTTOXETER
 Jumps, 7-race card
 1st race: 2.00
 Winning favourite: 36.3%

EARLY BIRD
 Best value this morning
 102 with Coral
 Wetherby 3.40

Long distance travellers:
 The Flying Doctor (3.00), 188 miles

TV: None of today's meetings

RACELINE

09066 168+1

WETHERBY 101 201
 UTTOXETER 102 202
 SOUTHWELL 103 203
 IRISH 120 220



Patrick Berger, of Liverpool, tumbles beneath the challenge of Olivier Dacourt, of Everton, at Anfield on Saturday. Photograph: Ross Kimbaird/Allsport

Berger finally comes good to satisfy hunger for points

This week's player lists (right) are based on the games played on Easter Saturday only. Points gained in games played yesterday and tonight will be included in next week's lists, along with next weekend's FA Carling Premiership programme.

Saturday's games brought a welcome reward for a member of one of society's permanently impoverished groups. Robin Newnham of Marcham, Oxfordshire, a first-year university student, is the winner of our weekly prize, in this case £1,000, a roll-over in the absence of any Premiership games last week.

"Money always comes in handy for students," he said. He also gets £100 worth of sports equipment.

Mr Newnham is studying History at Lincoln College, Oxford, and was pleased to hear the news of his win after a slightly disappointing weekend; he went to watch the Boat Race, which Oxford lost, while his favourite football team, Tottenham Hotspur, also came second, at home to Leicester City, who took revenge for their defeat in the Worthington Cup final with a 2-0 victory at White Hart Lane.

Yet even that cloud had a silver lining, as the performance of Matt Elliott, the Leicester defender and Scotland international, who scored and helped his team to a clean sheet, was worth a total of

six points. "I had mixed feelings about that," Mr Newnham admitted. The other top points-scorer in the team, Mindbenders, was Patrick Berger, of Liverpool, with a goal and an assist against Everton in the Merseyside derby, worth a total of five. "He didn't do too well at the beginning, but he's in good form now," Mr Newnham said.

It capped a satisfying few days for Berger, who was in the Czech Republic side that won in Scotland last Wednesday; Matt Elliott, incidentally, also played in that game, scoring an unfortunate own goal in the 2-1 defeat. In a remarkably consistent team performance, seven of Mr Newnham's selection scored three points each: Mark

Bosnich, Andy Impey, Nigel Winterburn and Frank Leboeuf were involved in shut-outs, while David Beckham, Paulo Wanchoppe and Jason Euell scored goals. Euell and Beckham in the same match.

The only two non-contributors to the total of 32 points were Steve Stone and Paul Merson of Aston Villa.

□ Since no ON-Target numbers were printed on this page last week, the winner of this week's competition can look forward to a roll-over prize of £1,000. So if your team total based on this week's player lists comes to either 1, 7 or 17, follow the instructions below to find out if you are a winner.

□ Two weeks ago, in our Fantasy Quiz on this page, we asked you what four particular players had in common. Alan Shearer (Newcastle United), Mark Hughes (Southampton), Paul Ince (Liverpool) and Gary Pallister (Middlesbrough) all know how it feels to win the FA Carling Premiership, even if none of them seem to have much chance of repeating the feat with their current clubs.

□ For legal reasons, *The Times* Fantasy League is no longer able to accept entries from players under 18 years of age. Players 17 and under already registered in the main and youth leagues will, however, be allowed to remain in the competition.



Time to reap the rewards of patience

With less than a fifth of the season remaining, managers in *The Times* Fantasy League can be crippled by player injuries and suspensions and now is the time that those who have some transfers saved for a rainy day can reap the rewards.

With the Premiership transfer deadline day passing without any major moves, Fantasy League managers are wise in the

knowledge that the only possible additions to the player list are those who have spent much of the season in the reserves. This ensures that potential purchasers should keep an eagle eye on players who have most opportunities to score some points.

After next weekend, Chelsea, Liverpool, Manchester United and Tottenham will have only played 31 of their 38 fixtures,

whereas many Premiership sides will have played 33. A three-match ban for a player at this stage of the season can prove very costly indeed for Fantasy League managers.

Want to make one of your 12 transfers? Call
0640 625 103
(ex-UK +44 870 901 4232)
0640 calls cost 60p per minute
Ex UK calls charged at national rates

Those owning Robbie Fowler face an anxious wait regarding the news of his disciplinary hearing, where he is virtually guaranteed a penalty. A massive fine will not concern Fantasy League managers, but a hefty ban will hit them hard.

However, a two-match ban will still mean that he has the same amount of opportunities to score as Bergkamp, Anelka and Dublin because of the fact that

his team have failed to play all their scheduled fixtures so far.

The list of players that have been told their season is over is growing. Ramon Vega is the latest to hear those dreaded words and joins the list, including Pierluigi Casiraghi, Robert Molenar, Martin Hiden and Jeff Kenna who will all have to wait until next season before they kick a ball in vain again.

MATT SIMS

Are you on target to win £1,000?

Congratulations to Ms P Kelly, of London EC1, the main winner of ON-Target from two weeks ago.

Even if you do not have a Fantasy League team, you can enter this new game now – or enter a new one simply for ON-Target. All managers have the chance to win a share of £28,000 of new prizes. *The Times* has teamed up with EA Sports to offer you the chance to own the renowned FIFA 99 game. Every week you could win:

- 1st Prize: £500 plus an EA Sports Pack
- 4 runners up: EA Sports Packs
- 10 additional runners up: FIFA 99 CD-Rom.

Each EA Sports Pack contains: FIFA 99 for the PlayStation; FIFA 99 for the PC; EA Sports T-Shirt, key ring and mini football plus a record bag. If you already have a team in the main game, you're ready to play ON-Target. Simply check your Fantasy League players' score each week and see if their total is the same as our ON-Target winners' line. If you have scored the exact target points, a quick call to our ON-Target winners' line (national rate call) will put you in the draw to win one of the 15 prizes. You can enter at any time and there are no limits

THIS WEEK'S ON-TARGET SCORE

Has your team scored...
1, 7 or 17

points?
Check your total, then ring
0870 901 4270
(ex-UK +44 870 901 4270)
Calls charged at national rates

FANTASY LEAGUE SERVICES

Use these numbers for all the information you need:

CHECKLINE

To check your team's standing
0640 625 102
(ex-UK +44 870 901 4232)

TRANSFER LINE

To alter your team
0640 625 103
(ex-UK +44 870 901 4232)
0640 calls cost 60p per minute (ex UK numbers charge at national rates)

FAXBACK

A comprehensive update sheet
0991 123 720
(ex-UK +44 870 901 4230)

SUPER LEAGUE FAXBACK

A brand new service
0991 123 721
(ex-UK +44 870 901 4279)
Faxbacks cost £1 per minute (ex UK numbers charge at national rates)

HELPLINE

for any queries
01582 702720

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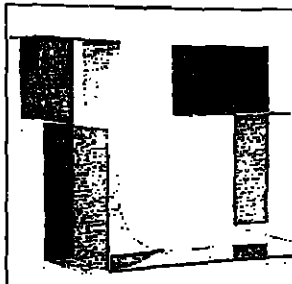
CHOOSE YOUR PLAYERS FROM HERE

Columns show code, name, club, weekly points, total points, value (in £m).

GOALKEEPERS											
102	D. Seaman	ARS	3	46	3.7	135	I. Wetherby	AST	0	11	3.5
103	M. Hennessey	AST	3	12	3.7	136	I. Wetherby	AST	0	11	3.5
104	M. Ramsdale	AST	3	12	3.7	137	I. Wetherby	AST	0	9	4.0
105	M. Ramsdale	AST	3	12	3.7	138	D. Bell	BLA	0	0	4.0
106	M. Ramsdale	AST	3	12	3.7	139	D. Bell	BLA	0	0	4.0
107	A. Rabush	BLA	0	1	2.6	140	T. Sherson	BLA	0	17	4.1
108	J. Filton	BLA	0	0	4.4	141	T. Sherson	BLA	0	0	3.3
109	J. Filton	BLA	0	0	4.4	142	R. Kean	BLA	0	0	3.3
110	J. Filton	BLA	0	0	4.4	143	R. Kean	BLA	0	0	3.3
111	J. Filton	BLA	0	0	4.4	144	R. Kean	BLA	0	0	3.3
112	J. Filton	BLA	0	0	4.4	145	R. Kean	BLA	0	0	3.3
113	J. Filton	BLA	0	0	4.4	146	R. Kean	BLA	0	0	3.3
114	J. Filton	BLA	0	0	4.4	147	R. Kean	BLA	0	0	3.3
115	J. Filton	BLA	0	0	4.4	148	R. Kean	BLA	0	0	3.3
116	J. Filton	BLA	0	0	4.4	149	R. Kean	BLA	0	0	3.3
117	J. Filton	BLA	0	0	4.4	150	R. Kean	BLA	0	0	3.3
118	J. Filton	BLA	0	0	4.4	151	R. Kean	BLA	0	0	3.3
119	J. Filton	BLA	0	0	4.4	152	R. Kean	BLA	0	0	3.3
120	J. Filton	BLA	0	0	4.4	153	R. Kean	BLA	0	0	3.3
121	J. Filton	BLA	0	0	4.4	154	R. Kean	BLA	0	0	3.3
122	J. Filton	BLA	0	0	4.4	155	R. Kean	BLA	0	0	3.3
123	J. Filton	BLA	0	0	4.4	156	R. Kean	BLA	0	0	3.3
124	J. Filton	BLA	0	0	4.4	157	R. Kean	BLA	0	0	3.3
125	J. Filton	BLA	0	0	4.4	158	R. Kean	BLA	0	0	3.3
126	J. Filton	BLA	0	0	4.4	159	R. Kean	BLA	0	0	3.3
127	J. Filton	BLA	0	0	4.4	160	R. Kean	BLA	0	0	3.3
128	J. Filton	BLA	0	0	4.4	161	R. Kean	BLA	0	0	3.3
129	J. Filton	BLA	0	0	4.4	162	R. Kean	BLA	0	0	3.3
130	J. Filton	BLA	0	0	4.4	163	R. Kean	BLA	0	0	3.3
131	J. Filton	BLA	0	0	4.4	164	R. Kean	BLA	0	0	3.3
132	J. Filton	BLA	0	0	4.4	165	R. Kean	BLA	0	0	3.3
133	J. Filton	BLA	0	0	4.4	166	R. Kean	BLA	0	0	3.3
134	J. Filton	BLA	0	0	4.4	167	R. Kean	BLA	0	0	3.3
135	J. Filton	BLA	0	0	4.4	168	R. Kean	BLA	0	0	3.3
136	J. Filton	BLA	0	0	4.4	169	R. Kean	BLA	0	0	3.3
137	J. Filton	BLA	0	0	4.4	170	R. Kean	BLA	0	0	3.3
138	J. Filton	BLA	0	0	4.4	171	R. Kean	BLA	0	0	3.3
139	J. Filton	BLA	0	0	4.4	172	R. Kean	BLA	0	0	3.3
140	J. Filton	BLA	0	0	4.4	173	R. Kean	BLA	0	0	3.3
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VISUAL ART
Rediscovering
Katarzyna
Kobro in Leeds
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THE TIMES ARTS

OPERA

Exploring
depravity
with Salome
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Descartes deconstructed in space

Reality goes into the cybermancer
in Hollywood's latest high-tech
blockbuster. Giles Whittell reports

It was as if David L. Smith had sneaked into a preview of *The Matrix* and seen in it his destiny. Smith was the 30-year-old computer programmer arrested on Friday for sending a paralyzing virus called Melissa racing through the Internet. His pursuit through cyberspace to New Jersey by the FBI and America Online was an uncanny echo of *The Matrix*'s opening scenes, which even then, with mind-boggling panache, were blasting their way into general release.

Smith could get 40 years in prison, but unless he is very unlucky, he won't have his mouth digitally sealed by cyborg agents dressed like the Blues Brothers. Nor will a mechanical scorpion bore its way into his belly button as his entire understanding of reality is upended and rebuilt in a grimy rebel battleship fleeing from dastardly machines in a world where humans are trapped in slime and plundered for "bioelectricity". This is what happens to Keanu Reeves in his first decent thriller since *Speed*.

The only advance clue that *The Matrix* might be any good was the fact that it was directed by Andy and Larry Wachowski, who made *Bound* in 1996. Brothers are all the rage as film-making teams — to wit the Coens, the Farrellys and now, in London, the Butterworths — and *Bound*, full of black leather and lesbian lust, proved a cult hit with the lesbian and gay crowd. Otherwise *The Matrix* did itself no favours with its marketing. With a desperately high-concept title and billboards that looked like advertisements for bikini gear and semi-automatic weapons, it seemed designed to pull in a few bored male adolescents but deter all grown-ups. They should not be put off.

Philosophically, *The Matrix* starts by pulling apart "I think, therefore I am" and replacing it, in an age of virtual hyper-reality about 100 years hence, with "I think I am, but I'm not sure any more". Such is Reeves's initial, terrifying suspicion, gleaned from sleepless nights spent hacking into the rebel (ie, human) underworld. He is right, of course. Everything he thought was real is virtual, fed to him and millions like him through data uplinks in the backs of their necks by a grotesque artificial intelligence that took over the planet in the middle of the 21st century. Steaks, jobs, nightclubs and even dreams are all digital. Real reality is the grim but noble struggle to win back freedom for humanity.

There is plenty of pseudo-scientific claptrap here. The dialogue, as *Daily Variety* noted,

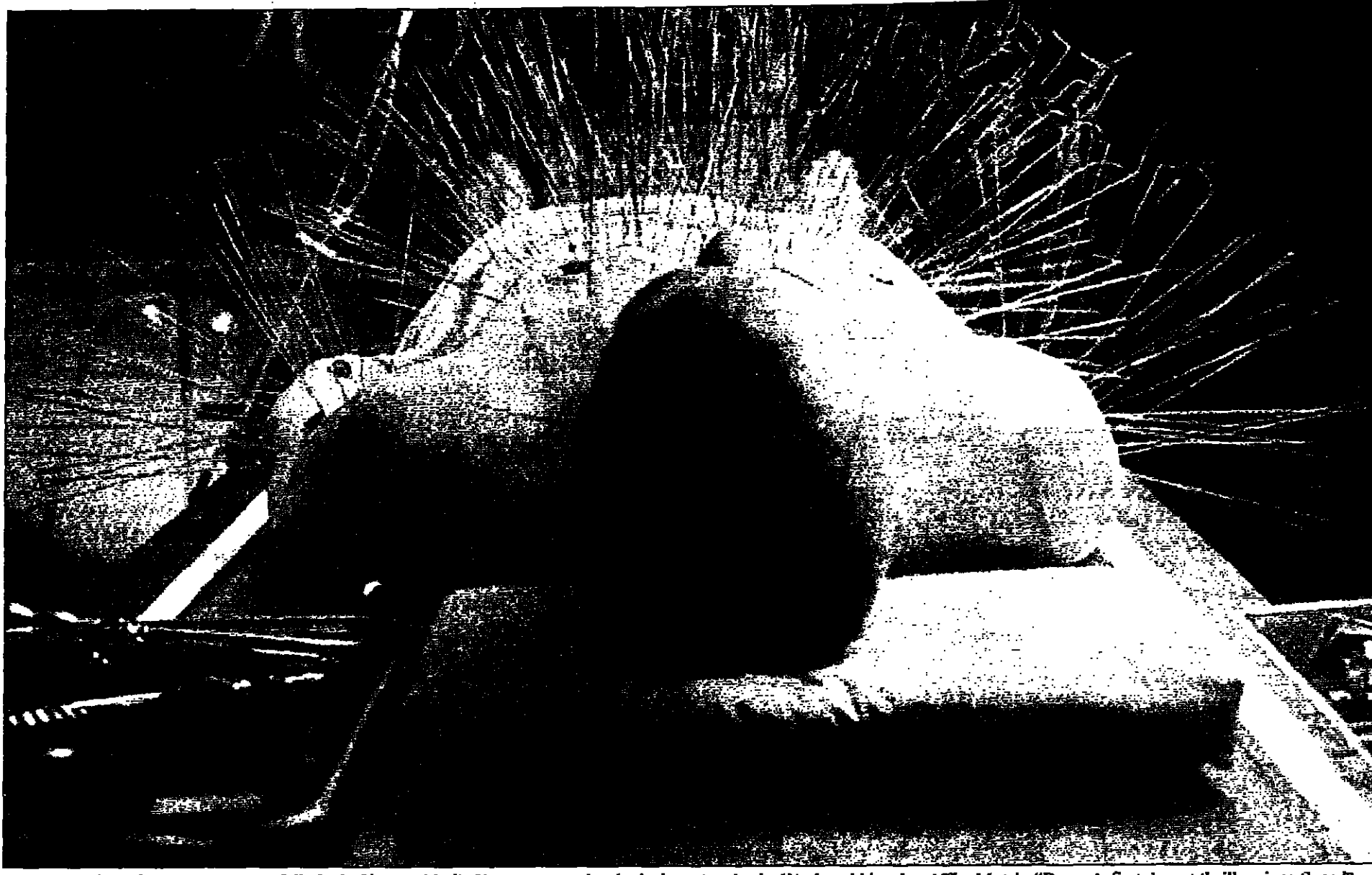
**BIG
SCREEN
USA**

is drenched in a "pretentious mumbo-jumbo of undergraduate mythology, religious mysticism and technobabble". But at least you have to think, which is a huge bonus in a film that will be remembered mainly for its staggering visual effects. *The Matrix* boasts enough squid-like robots and gothicky futurism to satisfy sci-fi purists, but where it pushes the envelope is with the human form. Reeves and Co spent three months training with a Hong Kong-based "wire fighting" expert and then surrendered their images to what the production notes call "bullet-time photography" — the computerised equivalent of super-slow motion shot at 12,000 frames per second. The resulting kung fu and shootout sequences have people stopping bullets and leaping between tall buildings without so much as a magic cape. Superman should look to his laurels.

"Unfortunately no one can be told what the matrix is," Laurence Fishburne intones as the captain of the rebel crew. "You have to see it for yourself." The same goes for the film. In technical terms it picks up where *Terminator 2* left off, and generally up the ante for the next instalment of *Star Wars*.

Almost incidentally, *The Matrix* also proves at last that Reeves is more than a one-hit wonder. Like Fishburne, who is still busy explaining plot details a full hour into the proceedings, he holds his own in the face of the special effects by acting as little as possible and without a trace of self-parody. The only real performance here is by Hugo Weaving, who, as a relentless villain with bad skin and yellow teeth, is given plenty of time to establish his credentials as Hollywood's new Tommy Lee Jones. And the only real quibble is with the damp squib role given to Carrie-Anne Moss. She looks terrific in a black catsuit, and she can run and jump and fall down as well as any of the rebels. Towards the end the question of which of them will save the world arises, and she could have been a contender. Instead she just gives Reeves a revivifying kiss.

A lack of female assertiveness is one complaint that can-



Getting the point: Keanu Reeves falls foul of humankind's 21st-century technological masters in the Wachowski brothers' *The Matrix*. "Reeves's first decent thriller since *Speed*"

not be made of *The Out-of-Towners*, an egregiously unoriginal vehicle for Steve Martin and Goldie Hawn that Paramount must have hoped would not be competing for *The Matrix*'s audience. It certainly looks made for ageing baby-boomers, with Martin and Hawn prattling mindlessly from Ohio to Central Park in nice cashmere coats, and Hawn proving the tough-

er cookie in a crisis. This is an unnecessary remake of a not terribly good 1970 original. Its American stars are watchable enough losing their heads in airports and hire cars, but they are undermined by a script whose premise is not so much out of town as out of date: New York is simply no longer scary, even to ludd-

Martin and Hawn are also

comprehensively upstaged by our very own John Cleese. He has seven minutes of screen time as a hideously unctuous Manhattan hotel manager, and they hint tantalisingly at what might have become of Basil Fawlty had Cleese not tired of writing his lines. So how about it? Fawltly hits New York! Takes on the Matrix! You saw it here first.

www.whatsthematrix.com

US WEEKEND BOX-OFFICE TAKINGS AND ANALYSIS

1	(3) <i>The Matrix</i> (Warner)	\$27.6m
2	(4) <i>10 Things I Hate About You</i> (Touchstone)	\$2.7m
3	(1) <i>The Out-of-Towners</i> (Paramount)	\$8.1m
4	(2) <i>Analyze This</i> (Warner)	\$6.3m/\$69.3m
5	(1) <i>Forces of Nature</i> (DreamWorks)	\$6.3m/\$26.8m
6	(3) <i>Edwy</i> (Universal)	\$4.8m/\$6.3m
7	(8) <i>Shakespeare in Love</i> (Miramax)	\$3.3m/\$79.3m
8	(5) <i>Dog's 1st Movie</i> (Walt Disney)	\$3.1m/\$4.5m
9	(6) <i>Life is Beautiful</i> (Miramax)	\$2.8m/\$40.1m
10	(4) <i>The Hot Chick</i> (Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer)	\$2.4m/\$6.1m

First amount is estimated weekend takings, April 2-4. Second amount is total takings to March 29. Figure in brackets indicates last week's position.

● New releases dominate this week's chart. The low-budget teen movie *10 Things I Hate About You*, an update of Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew*, has jumped in at the No 2 spot behind *The Matrix*, while *The Out-of-Towners*, a remake of the classic 1970 comedy, is at No 3

MUSIC: Hilary Finch on the South Bank concert tomorrow which will boost a cancer campaign



Peter Jablonski: aiding the Everyman cancer appeal

The Swedish pianist Peter Jablonski first met a double-bass player called Thomas Croxon when they were students together at the Royal College of Music. Both had quite a career ahead of them: Jablonski as a pianist who would tour North America and Japan four times before he was 30; Croxon as a freelance double-bass much in demand by the Philharmonia, London Symphony and BBC orchestras. Neither of them was to know that in October 1997 Croxon's career was to be stopped in its tracks by the onset of testicular cancer.

While ill in St Bartholomew's Hospital, Croxon noticed that *The Times* was running an appeal for the Institute of Cancer Research's Everyman campaign to set up Britain's first dedicated Male Urological Research Centre. "When I got better," Croxon says, "I just wanted to do something to

You need friends

honour the doctors who looked after me. Chemotherapy can often affect high-tone hearing, and my specialist was very aware of how this might affect me as a musician. And I felt that this particular appeal would enable me to use the voice of music to thank him, and to spread the word further to raise the profile of male cancer research."

It just so happened that, at exactly that time, Croxon had turned on his radio in hospital and heard a rather remarkable performance of Beethoven's *Moonlight Sonata*. The pianist was Vladimir Ashkenazy. Croxon's first week back at work took him on tour with Ashkenazy, and he asked him if he would conduct the gala fund-raising concert he was plotting. Croxon then remembered that his old college friend, Jablonski, had recorded Gershwin's Piano Concerto with Ashkenazy, and the deal was struck. "Tomorrow, both musicians will donate their fees from their Festival Hall concert to the appeal."

The Gershwin concerto fuses a jazz musician's free-wheeling exuberance with the more formal disciplines of a concert pianist on his best behaviour. And that sort of fusion is very much what makes Jablonski the musician he is. His first public performance was with a jazz band at the age of six: he went for the drums, "and I guess I still have the rhythm." The piano moved centrestage for Jablonski when he came to London to

study at the RCM in 1988. And Ashkenazy had already spotted him and asked if he could conduct his recording of the Gershwin.

Jablonski went on to make his name with Tchaikovsky, with Rachmaninov, with Scriabin. "As a young pianist you are constantly asked to play the heroic, romantic repertoire." But slowly, privately, he has been focusing on Beethoven, learning the concertos out of the spotlight be-

fore daring to approach the Third Concerto with the Royal Philharmonic and Daniele Gatti next year.

For Croxon, it's business as usual: he will be back playing in the company of his old Philharmonia friends in Bernstein, Gershwin and Rimsky-Korsakov tomorrow. "The concert will close one chapter of my life, and open another one. And it really will be for everyone. There will be many people in the audience who won't have been to a concert before. I'm so excited about that."

● Music for Everyman gala concert, Festival Hall, tomorrow at 7.30pm (0171-960-4242)

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A guide to the best classical CDs, in conjunction with BBC Radio 3

■ **MOZART'S PIANO CONCERTO NO 21**
Reviewed by Colin Lawson
MOST people still associate this wonderful concerto with Bo Widerberg's 1967 film *Elvira Madigan*. Its story-line revolves around a chronicle of hopeless love, complemented by the wistful Romantic qualities of Mozart's slow movement, with its muted pizzicato strings, murmuring accompaniment and seamless flow of melody. But the outer movements of this concerto are also truly inspired, with some remarkable contrasts of mood and content.

Mozart completed the work in March 1785, during an amazingly busy period of teaching, giving concerts and entertaining his father in Vienna. We can only speculate on the qualities of Mozart's own playing, though something of the original sound is recreated on Malcolm Bilson's recording for DG Archiv on a copy of the composer's own fortepi-

ano. On this disc the delicate sound of the solo instrument is not quite balanced by the powerful forces of John Elliot Gardiner's English Baroque Soloists.

Another type of balance problem emerges in certain older recordings made with full symphony orchestras by pianists such as Clifford Curzon, Arthur Schnabel and Rudolph Serkin. One of the most poetic of vintage recordings is the highly recommendable version by Annie Fischer and the Philharmonia, recorded in 1959.

Mozart's piano concertos represent one of the most competitive areas in the marketplace, and there has been a veritable avalanche of recordings during the past 20 years. An-

● To order the recommended recording, with free delivery, please send a cheque payable to The Times Music Shop to FREE-POST, SCO681, Forbes, IV36 0BR or phone 0345 023 498; e-mail: music@the-times.co.uk. Next Saturday on Radio 3 (11am): Poulenc's Concerto for Organ Strings and Timpani

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Salome

Modernism's missing link

VISUAL ART: In Leeds John Russell Taylor admires afresh the vision of the Polish artist Katarzyna Kobro

The biggest gallery of the Henry Moore Institute in Leeds is a luminous white box, a cube extended upwards and able to receive a blaze of natural light filtered down from above. Usually one is not conscious of this, since the floor space is often compartmented, its lighting moderated. But at the moment, hanging as it were in the midst of this white void, are a group of sculptures, all of them abstract and several painted in simple, primary, De Stijl colours. In fact, they only appear to be suspended: they are actually standing on translucent plastic stands very much like those designed by their artist more than half a century ago as the ideal support for her sculptures.

The artist is Katarzyna Kobro. Twentieth-century art history seems to be full of supposedly key figures of whom no one has ever heard, but it cannot be denied that Kobro is a major discovery outside Poland. Or, in England, strictly speaking a major rediscovery, since she and her artist husband Vladislav Strzemiński have cropped up in mixed British exhibitions, most recently in Anneli Juda's 1993 show *Couples*, celebrating pairs of married artists: the Delaunays, the Arps, Ben Nicholson and Barbara Hepworth, Jackson Pollock and Lee Krasner, Kobro and Strzemiński. But there has never, anywhere, been a comprehensive solo retrospective devoted to Kobro, and that now staged in Leeds presents her and her art in a wholly new perspective.

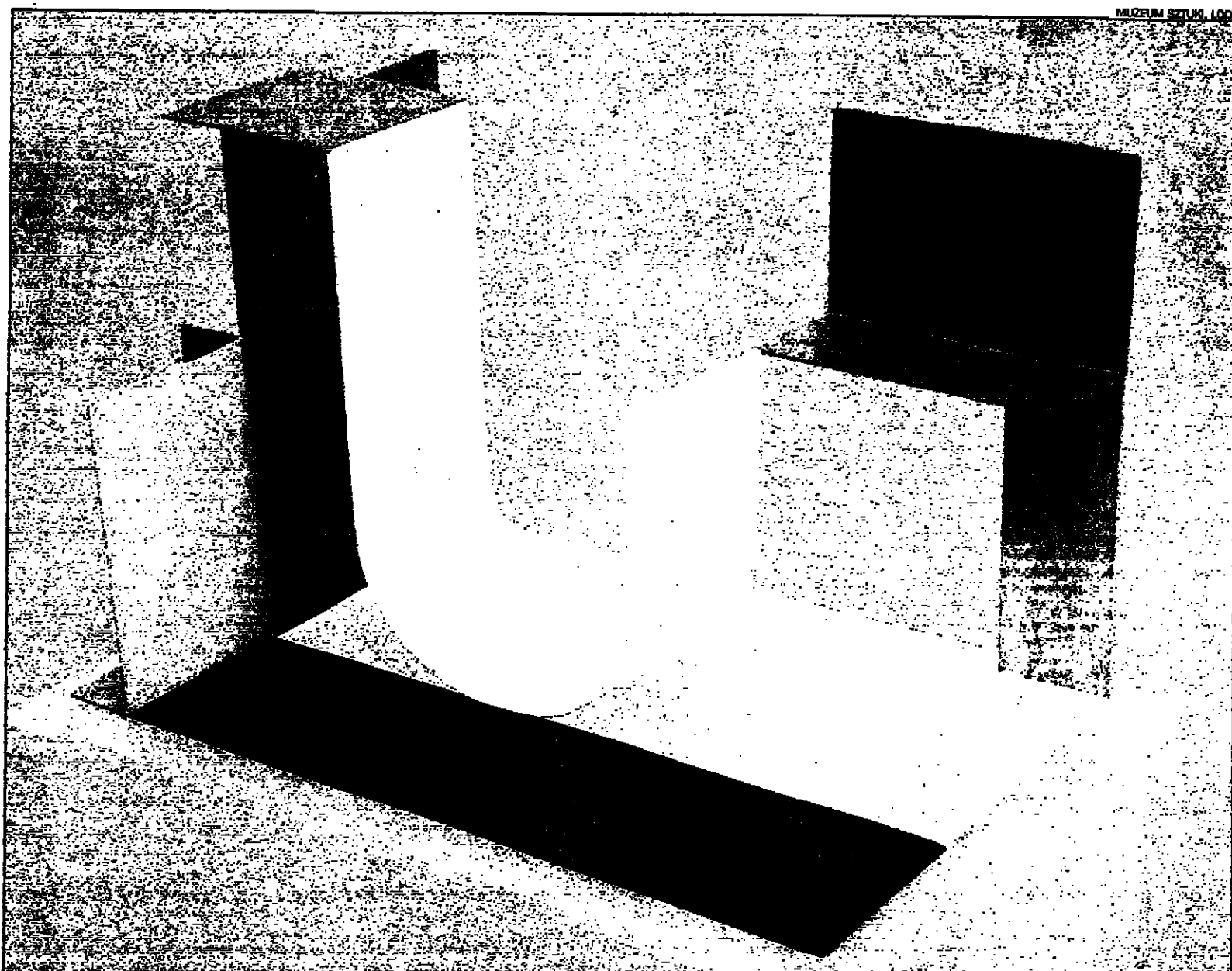
'She has become a hot tip in movers and shakers'

The show is arranged in collaboration with the Muzeum Szuki in Lodz, which now incorporates the first museum in the world devoted to abstract art, founded by Kobro and Strzemiński in the Thirties. It is through the determination of the museum, and of Kobro's daughter, that her fame has been kept alive since her death in 1951 — both by the conservation and judicious exhibition of the surviving works, and by, more recently, the meticulous reconstruction of works lost or partially destroyed during the difficult days of the German occupation and the war, when they were kept in her tiny Lodz flat.

The 25 works shown in Leeds, a handful of them present only in photographs of lost originals which do not contain enough information to allow reconstruction, constitute virtually the entire corpus of Kobro's work now in existence.

What, then, is so important about Kobro, that she has become the world's hottest tip for reinstatement in the pantheon of makers and shakers of modern art?

Partly the importance is historical: she is the vital link between Constructivism in Russia and Modernist Abstraction in Central Europe. Kobro was born in Russia in 1898, and received her art training in Moscow, becoming a close associate of Malevich and Tatlin in their first experimental work with non-representational form. In 1916 she met Strzemiński in a military hospital, where she was working



Spatial Composition 4 (1929) by Katarzyna Kobro, who was the vital conduit through which Modernism developed independently in Central Europe

as a nurse and he had been placed after being wounded. They married and in 1922, finding the atmosphere of Russia by then increasingly restrictive, resettled in Poland, in Strzemiński's native Lodz. Throughout the years between the wars they both worked intensively for modern art, writing, showing their own work and teaching: Kobro taught applied arts in an industrial training school for women, as well as working in architecture and the theatre. She was the conduit through which a sort of Modernism parallel to that of De Stijl in Holland developed independently in Central Europe, and continued to take hold even after it had been completely rooted out in Stalinist Russia.

This is important. But even more important now is the singular purity and beauty of the work itself. The hanging mobiles continue to move gracefully in the slightest breeze, the

stables (as Calder would have called them) occupy their own space with curved and rectilinear shapes which radiate at once dynamism and tranquillity. The later work develops according to an intricate mathematical system of proportions which she evolved for herself, based ultimately on the Golden

Section. It was clearly a tragedy for art that motherhood and the coming of war forced Kobro to give up serious work. But what does exist is truly magical.

Henry Moore Institute, 74 The Headrow, Leeds (0113 234 3158), daily 10am-5.30pm (Wed to 9pm), until June 27

Top talent on tap

With multiple opera commissions and recent West End representation via *Jesus Christ Superstar* and *Doctor Dolittle*, Aletta Collins is at the top of the independent dance-makers' ladder. Stephen Hughes, meanwhile, is clambering up it. Both were showcased last week at The Place Theatre, as part of London's *Spring Loaded* dance festival.

Hughes's trio of works for his Red Rain Dance Theatre secures his spot in the "watch this space" category. *Heddo-Serie* observes four young people indulging in a game of dice. Gradually, as booze erodes inhibitions, their initial, post-juvenile behaviour (flashes of flesh, same-sex kisses) slides toward deeper, darker waters. The piece winds up suggesting, rather than revealing, the quartet's more dangerous undercurrents of fantasy, aggression and intimacy, but there is a convincing texture to the on-stage relationships of Hughes, Stephen Berkeley-White, Desiree Kongerød and Sine Nilsen.

Where Raging Fires Meet embroils all five

DANCE

dancers in a set-to between an exhausted woman and a proprietorial male. Although the dance gets lost up a blind alley of dramatised abstractions, it shows that Hughes is gifted. Mastery of form should follow.

The bill was rounded out by *Here Comes Renard*, a barnyard battle-of-the-sexes sprung from Stravinsky's 1915 "burlesque tale in song and dance", *Renard*. Imbued with the rough precocity of youth, this jape of a dance underlines Hughes's interest in character and group dynamics. Cast as chickens and foxes, members of Scottish Ballet kept the fur and feathers flying.

The starting point of Collins's double-bill was her kinetic response to the energy coursing through 20th-century American music. Leonard Bernstein's *Prelude, Fugue and Riffs* percolated beneath the solo *Certain Obsessions*. Collins brought brash confidence to this throwaway comic piece to a performer's cheesy neuroses.

In *Alice is Back in Wonderland*, a free-form and humorous spin-off from Lewis Carroll, Collins made dizzy use of Gershwin's glorious *Rhapsody in Blue*. Her cohorts were the statuesque redheads Anna Williams and Ragnhild Olsen, and Rachel Krichke, shortish and brunette like Collins. Resembling a young Woody Allen, complete with spectacles, Krichke lent riveting authority and superb timing to the central role. But the others, Collins included, were no slouches. With its stop-go rhythms, her choreography was consistently light and ingenious. Alasdair Grabner's cool, aqueous lighting and Jackie Gallows's airy white pyjama costumes helped to make this one of the most delightful dances in recent memory.

DONALD HUTERA

Richard Cork turns over the glossy new leaves of a coffee-table crop of lavishly illustrated spring books for art-lovers

Collected works that speak volumes

Under Neil MacGregor's directorship, the National Gallery is flourishing as never before. And to complement the excellence of its shows, display and acquisitions, the gallery is publishing a superb series of catalogues devoted to different aspects of its collection. Its latest volume, *The 15th-Century Netherlandish Schools* (National Gallery, £55), may sound dry, but the book is a visual delight, backing the author Lorne Campbell's profound scholarship with excellent colour plates.

It serves to underline just how many outstanding Netherlandish paintings from this crucial period are owned by the gallery, even if Campbell is unafraid to demote several familiar images. Often regarded as a masterpiece by Robert Campin, *The Virgin and Child before a Firescreen* has "many incongruities" and may be "a highly sophisticated pastiche based on several Campinesque prototypes". But the secure authorship of many other pictures is reinforced at length — not least the great Jan van Eyck portrait of Arnolfini and his wife, whose miraculous intensity is revealed in a wealth of detail.

Our national collections are equally rich in paintings produced in the southern Netherlands during the 17th century. Both Rubens and Van Dyck were prized by Charles I, and many of their canvases remain in this country. But Hans Vlieghe, in his comprehensive survey of Flemish Art and Architecture 1585-1700 (Yale, £50), redresses the balance. He places these two masters firmly in the context of their nation's culture, encompassing not only painters as substantial as Jacob Jordaens but a wealth of lesser-known names. The result is constantly illuminating, not least for Vlieghe's discussion of notable sculpture and architecture often overlooked in Britain.

Discoveries also abound in Sybille Ebert-Schifferer's magisterial *Still Life: A History* (Abrams, £79.95). Rooms full of flower paintings in museums can seem dull, but the truth is that still life has prompted some of the finest achievements in Western art. Ebert-Schifferer takes an admirably wide view, showing how the subject began in classical images of "hospitality gifts" and was then rediscovered during the Renaissance period. Hans Memling's exquisite *Ma-*

jolica Vase with Flowers is a pioneering example, but other northern artists such as Barthel Bruyn soon began to explore the darker, mortality-obsessed world of the vanitas. Skulls appear, and in succeeding centuries the concern with death runs hand in hand with a desire to celebrate the natural world. Often the two impulses unite: Caravaggio's *Boy with Fruit* looks luscious, but signs of decay are detectable on closer scrutiny. Even in David Hockney's 1988 *Still Life with Book on a Table*, the most recent painting here, attractiveness is countered by a sense of vulnerability.

Timed to coincide with the National Gallery's current survey of Ingres portraits, Aileen Ribeiro's *Ingres in Fashion* (Yale, £30) offers an excellent accompaniment to the show. Any suspicion that the book might trivialise a great painter is quickly scotched by the searching intelligence of Ribeiro's text. She reveals how seriously Ingres approached the task of depicting the fashionable woman, and how much attention he paid to their clothes. The magnificent illustrations close in on details with such sensuous clarity that readers may well feel impelled to pay



Nina Hammett's 1916 oil sketch of an Omega room from Tanya Harrod's *The Crafts in Britain in the 20th Century*

the exhibition a second visit. A more elegant note is sounded by Robert Gordon's and Andrew Forge's *The Last Flowers of Maest* (Abrams, £7.95), for these deceptively beguiling little paintings, each concentrating on a few blooms

in a glass vessel, were executed by a dying man. Probably suffering from body-wasting syphilis, Maest was just over 50 when the fatal illness began to erode his strength. Hence the modesty of these canvases, swift studies of bouquets often

sent by concerned friends. Most are surprisingly buoyant, but *Flowers in a Crystal Vase* does look dispirited as the petals struggle to emerge from the encircling darkness.

The spirit of Modernism at its most optimistic is evoked in Matthew Gale's and Chris Stephens's *Barbara Hepworth* (Tate Gallery, £35), a scholarly and splendidly illustrated catalogue of the Tate's unrivalled collection of her work. During the interwar period, when she came to maturity in London, hopes were high for integrating adventurous modern art and architecture with a new society. Many of her finest carvings date from that heady period, before the war drove her to Cornwall. But she soon found ample inspiration in her new surroundings. Some of the finest colour plates show how her sculpture seems at one with the flowers and plants springing from the fecund Cornish soil.

Hepworth herself appears, dressed as the sun and moon at a Penwith Society party, in Tanya Harrod's *The Crafts in Britain in the 20th Century* (Yale, £45). But Bernard Leach, seen in the same photograph, rightly plays a far more important role in Harrod's text. Her book is a formidable achievement, the first to encompass the full richness and variety of the crafts from before the First World War right up to the late 1980s. She traces an interaction with so-called fine art throughout, most notably in the multifaceted work of Eric Gill and the interiors designed by members of Roger Fry's Omega Workshop. Nina Hammett's oil sketch of an Omega room, published in 1917, shows how Duncan Grant's marquetry tray and

Fry's chair combine with the severely abstract wall paintings to produce an adventurous unity. Crafts nevertheless deserve to be studied in their own right, and Harrod does their history full justice throughout a volume enlivened by more than 500 illustrations. They embrace everything from William Morris's gold, leather-tooled copy of Karl Marx's *Le Capital* to Jacqueline Poncet's ebullient clay and enamel creature, half human, half animal, and bristling with vitality.

Anyone wanting to revisit the most notorious art-world controversies of the past half-century can now consult John A. Walker's *Art & Outrage* (Photo, £14.99). All the eruptions are here, from Alfred Munnings's splenetic attack on the avant-garde at the Royal Academy banquet to Marcus Harvey's vilified portrait of Myra Hindley in the *Sensation* exhibition. The British appetite for excoriating modern art is so voracious that Walker has no difficulty filling his book with venomous assaults by hysterical commentators.

New buildings can arouse equally acrid passions, and Daniel Libeskind's brilliant proposal for an extension to the Victoria and Albert Museum has already provoked feverish denunciations. But his Jewish Museum in Berlin has now opened, and Bernhard Schneider's book (Prestel, £9.95) reveals its compelling impact. Splintered and punctured on the facade, it offers macabre voids internally. Libeskind has memorialised the Jewish tragedy in an eloquent manner, producing a masterpiece of modern architecture right at the century's end.

Fiddling with tradition

Reader, I tried. I wore my best green trousers. I approached the Barbican humming *Danny Boy*. But once Michael O'Suilleabháin, Celtic crossover king and Limerick university professor, struck up at the piano with the Irish Chamber Orchestra, I lost faith in the magic of Ireland. In pieces like *Woodbrook* and *Ain, Sweet Dancer*, usually elaborated from folk materials, his fingers flew daintily over the keyboard, jiggling along with jazz embroidery while the orchestra strings mooched through some pastoral chords. Sometimes the strings entered first, sometimes the piano: sometimes a guest artist tootled or bowed on flute or violin. It made little difference: this was an evening of music stranded and lost somewhere between the Irish pub and the hotel cocktail lounge.

The strange thing is that considerable erudition lies blanketed behind O'Suilleabháin's bland tinklings. At Limerick he runs the Irish World Music



Centre. He organises courses in, among other things, plainchant, music therapy and "ethnochoreology". He knows his classics along with his folk melodies; and has basked in the guiding light of Seán O Riada, masterly composer and grandfather to the Chieftains, who first opened his ears to Ireland's folk heritage. A few selections, like a movement from a reworked concerto for traditional musician (flautist Niall Keegan), drew strength from O'Suilleabháin's classical training. Mostly the drooping sounds left me yearning for a real Irish knees-up. Percy Grainger's brisk folk workouts, or perhaps total silence. The amplified sound made it hard to accurately judge the finesse of O'Suilleabháin's pi-

ano or the youthful ICO strings. Amplifiers also did strange things to other soloists. Máiread Ní Mhaonaigh, from the Altan folk group, scraped through on the violin. But the talents of New Zealand harmonica player Brendan Power became swallowed in the reverberations of his own composition, *Lament for the 21st Century*, a threadbare piece, while Keegan's flute often offered more breath than notes.

The most instructive guest artist, however, was Brian Kennedy, Belfast-born pop singer. When he sang intimately to his guitar, his qualities shone. However, when piano and orchestra kicked in behind him with *You Are That Kind of Person* and *Heart of Stillness*, two O'Suilleabháin songs, the voice lost its colour in falsetto somersaults, ungainly bleats, and the strain of singing terrible words. A good night for the sale of Irish ale: a bad one for music.

GEOFF BROWN

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LISTINGS

Kate O'Mara in Salisbury

ARTS

OPERA

Spotlight on Giordano

OPERA: In the Italian provinces, Rodney Milnes reassesses the reputation of an unjustly despised composer.

Right between the ears

In the field of German opera it has become a cliché to remark that a colossal of the stature of Wagner causes fearful problems for his successors. Where on earth do you go from there? We do not quite know: composers went to atonality, Neo-Classicism, Expressionism, even Post-Modernism. It is less of a cliché to note the same situation in an Italy emerging from the shadow of Verdi, especially since his successor, Puccini, cast almost as long a shadow, and it is tempting simply to write off the latter's contemporaries as second-raters. Some of them were (did I hear you mention Cilea? Or Alfano?) but not all, and we honestly do not hear enough of them to make a balanced judgment. Zandonai — *Giulietta e Romeo*, Francesca da Rimini, *I cavalieri di Ekebu* — sounds more and more like the musical equivalent of d'Alema, with all that that implies, including the implication that he cannot simply be written off.

And Giordano is a big problem. His operas are regularly staged, everywhere, stuffer commentators dump on them just as regularly, and still they get staged. It might be an exaggeration to call *Fedora* the worst opera ever written, but it is among the worst operas regularly performed. *Andrea Chénier* is the one that resolutely refuses to go away: you

A feast of fun: the cast pull out all the stops in Giordano's *La cena delle beffe* at the Teatro Comunale in Bologna

can pick holes in its dramaturgy — the characters of Bersi, Roucher and the spy Incredibile have no real function: you can pick holes in the music — Giordano is sparing with tunes, which seldom last for more than a couple of bars and (understandably) seldom come back. But *Chénier* itself keeps on coming back: singers love to sing it, audiences love to hear it.

A younger and wiser friend once told me I might understand its appeal if I heard a good provincial performance in a good provincial Italian opera house, and the opportunity to do so in Parma last weekend, followed by Giordano's much later *La cena delle beffe* down the road in Bologna, proved irresistible. Just as my mentor was proved right. If you — and the performers — approach *Chénier* as a good, loud sing and no more, then it has a lot to commend it.

Ivan Stefanutti's production had no truck with earnest realism or encouraging singers to take part in serious drama: they faced out front and let the audience have it between the eyes, with a toss of the head and a twitch of outstretched arms at the end of numbers to elicit applause. Stefanutti's set showed a good section of a Parisian quarter, richly detailed, beautifully painted, dimly lit. The complete lack of pretension allowed what gut-

strength the piece has to shine through. And Nicola Mariucci's *Chénier* was much more than just provincial: his baritone tenor is richly coloured, he never screams (though he has all the requisite powerful top notes), and he phrases almost more musically than the notes deserve. A good rumbustious evening.

It is easy to forget that *Chénier* (1896) is a young man's opera — Giordano was 23 when he wrote it — and came well before *Tosca*. *La cena delle beffe*, or "Feast of Fools", (1924), is quite a different kettle of verismo: it was an education to hear what can happen to a composer in nearly 30 years.

The tunes — and they are good — do more than just start: they develop and conclude as logically as Puccini's. The orchestration is often spare and subtle — Giordano had been listening to Debussy. The dramatic is taut and to the point, the action based closely on a play by Sen Benelli. The subject is a wham-bam revenge melodrama, with bags of sex, stabbing and madness, both feigned and real. Maybe it does not aim too high, but it knows where it is going and gets there.

It was quite superbly performed in Bologna. The director Liliana Cavani updated the action from the Florence of

Lorenzo the Magnificent to the present day: the opening feast was in what looked like one of those city banks converted into a cocktail club, crammed with yuppies who threw bread-rolls and smoked cigarettes — you knew they were wrong 'uns.

The heroine's boudoir, where much of the sex'n'stuffing takes place, was the last word in designer chic, and the scene where the hard-drinking, womanising villain undergoes primitive aversion therapy by being made to confront his victims was horribly creepy. The whole *mise-en-scène* carried conviction.

Cena is as hard to sing as *Chénier*, and there was a quite overwhelming performance from the young Sardinian soprano Paoletta Marrocu, of whom we will hear more: firm, bright tone, quite unfazed either by the role's difficulties or by the fact that she had to spend a lot of the time in *deshabillé*. Alberto Cupido did honourably in the strenuous role of the avenger, and Marco Chingari smouldered dangerously as his victim, Roberto Polastri conducted with flair, and the sound in the acoustically lively Teatro Comunale was rich and rare. Late Giordano will obviously repay further investigation.

Dance to a brutal death

Richard Strauss's operatic genius lay at least partly in his ability to conjure up both beauty and violence more vividly than almost any other composer. He wrote some of the most erotic music for the stage, and also some of the most depraved. But that depravity has rarely seemed as strong as in English National Opera's latest revival of *Salome*: if the success of a performance can be judged on how uncomfortable it leaves you feeling, this one is a winner.

The "yuk-factor" in David Leveaux's 1996 staging is very high indeed, but never for gratuitous reasons. In fact, the production is sombre, and although it dispenses with all the Moreau-like, symbolist imagery of tradition, it remains true to many of the original stage directions — unusually, there is evidence of the sumptuous banquetting at Herod's palace.

Vicki Mortimer's set is dominated by a tall, crumbling brick wall, suggestive of a decaying regime, as are the costumes, which evoke the period of the opera's premiere (Dresden, 1905) and the reign of Kaiser Wilhelm II. It's all very ugly, and Jokanaan is kept prisoner in little more than a drain.

Salome Coliseum

Leveaux's production is a study of people on the edge of an "end game" and the omens that so trouble Herod oppress everyone else too. Characters are — literally, given the prominent place of a ladder in the set — climbing the wall. At the centre of everything is a wildly dysfunctional family: this is about much more than the sexual fantasies of a mixed-up teenager. Yet the staging never goes beyond what is already in the score, and that would have pleased a composer who once said: "The music is disgusting enough already."

Under David Atherton, the orchestra gives its all. This is a heavy-breathing performance, but one of great flexibility that moves with the drama, and there is also clarity in those moments of diaphanous beauty. Almost every word comes across, no mean feat in such a dense score. There have been more glowing accounts of the music, but they would be out of place in this interpretation: even *Salome's* Dance

is more suggestive of brutality than sexual languor.

But then, as performed by Vivian Tierney, there is little eroticism in the dance. She is a singing-actress quite capable of providing it, but instead plays the character as more than an obstinate, sex-crazed girl. Perhaps her *Salome* is sometimes too knowing or self-composed. Tierney is not an ideal *Salome* soprano, lacking the radiant sweep required for the big moments, yet she does project her lines with fresh impetuosity, and she makes much of the quieter moments.

Matthew Best, recovering from a chest cold, sounded a little woolly yet was still impressive in his first performance as the zealot Jokanaan. In another role debut, John Graham-Hall sang strongly as a debauched Herod, going over the top in his ageing brat characterisation only towards the end. Elizabeth Vaughan's Herodias just avoids caricature despite her Cruella De Vil-meets-Barbara Cartland get-up, and with Mark Le Brocq as Narraboth and Ethna Robinson an incisive Page, this is a good ENO ensemble.

JOHN ALLISON



Vivian Tierney as Salome rejoices in her gruesome prize

RECOMMENDED TODAY

Guide to arts and entertainment compiled by Merril Hargie

LONDON

MAMMA MIA! Musical based on the songs of ABBA. Stephen McCarthy and Lisa Stokke play mother and daughter on the eve of the girl's wedding. Phyllida Lloyd directs. Prince Edward (0171-447 5400). Opens tonight, 7pm.

JOHN HEDLEY. The popular comic and bard adds dance to his repertoire. In a week of cabaret-style performances he is joined by a parade of actors, performers, with snippets of choreography provided by Wendy Houston and Matthew. The Place (0171-387 0031). Opens tonight, 8pm.

BY MANY WOUNDS: A brief run for Zenne Harris's first play where parents try to keep one daughter ignorant of the fate of her sister. Hampstead Theatre (0171-722 9301). Opens tonight, 8pm.

ORCHESTRA OF THE AGE OF ENLIGHTENMENT: The rising young French contralto Nathalie Stutzman makes her debut with the renowned period instrument band in an evening of Corelli and Bach. Catherine Macintosh leads from the violin. Barbican (0171-638 8891). Tonight, 7.30pm.

COMPOSER CHOICE: In tonight's selection by Oliver Knussen the Enyom Ensemble plays a number of Knussen's own pieces together with works by Stravinsky, Berg, Bartok, Maxwell (0171-960 4242). Tonight, 7.30pm.

ELSEWHERE

GUILDFORD: Nick Wilton, Brian Oxtown and Edward de Souza star in Good Company's tour of Samuel

Lisa Stokke stars in the musical *Mamma Mia!*

Peppys, The Secret Diaries. Sue Tomory directs. Yvonne Arnaud (01453 44000). Opens tonight, 7.45pm. Until Sat. (5) **READING:** The St Petersburg Ballet Theatre concludes its British tour here with performances of two ballet classics: Swan Lake (tonight, Fri and Sat) and Giselle (tomorrow and Thurs). Heaton (0118 960 6060). Performances at 7.30pm.

SALISBURY: Kate O'Mara plays the ageing diva in Anouilh's *Columba*, a comedy of backstage intrigue and worldly wisdom. Jonathan Church directs. Jeremy Sams's new translation. Playhouse (01722 52333). Opens tonight, 7.30pm.

NEW WEST END SHOWS

Jeremy Kingston's choice of theatre shows in London

House full, returns only (5) Seats available (5) Seats at all prices

THE GIN GAME: Dorothy Tutin and Joss Ackland play old folk in a retirement home whose card-playing styles echo their real lives. Frith & Banbury directs a surprising Pulitzer Prize-winner. Savoy (0171-636 8888) (5)

THE PRISONER OF SECOND AVENUE: Richard Dreyfuss and Marsha Mason in their British stage debut in Neil Simon's play about big city angst. Theatre Royal, Haymarket (0171-930 8901) (5)

GOOD COP: Taylor's best play, facing a local professor's gradual descent into evil with the Nazis. Charles Dancie directs a strong cast. Charing Cross (0171-369 1700) (5)

CARD BOYS: The peds who stick sex cards in phone boxes have dreams of bettering themselves. Mike Packard's spirited play talks us. Bush (0161-743 3365)

400 JOKES WITH THE DEVIL: This is Theatre AB's touring account

of Eisenstein's life and career, from the Odessa Steps onwards, includes footage of his films. Lyric, W6 (0181-741 6701) (5)

THE COLONEL BIRD: Bulgarian author Hristo Boychev's award-winning play about an asylum taken over by the Nazis. Delistree & Gate (0171-229 0708)

THE LION, THE WITCH AND THE WARDROBE: Adrian Noble's spectacular production of the first Narnia adventure comes to town. Barbican (0171-638 8891) (5)

SACRED HEART: In Mick Mahoney's new play a second-generation Irish lad, brought up in NW5, meets again after years estranged. Edward Hall directs. Ambassadors (0171-595 5000)

GROSS INDEED: The Three Trials of Oscar Wilde. Michael Pennington plays Wilde, with William Holland and Clive Francis as counsel for and against, in Michael Korman's play. Gielgud (0171-494 5055)

James Christopher's choice of the latest movies

NEW RELEASES

TEA WITH MUSSOLINI (PG): Flashy of genius and dry humour illuminate Zeffirelli's sentimental tribute to the culture-mad English expatriate who raised the director in Florence before Mussolini jailed them. With Maggie Smith, John Gielgud, and Judi Dench.

PLUNKETT & MACLEANE (15): Jake Scott's 19th-century western. The duo is closer to Bud and Cassidy and the Sundance Kid than The Duke's Progress. With Robert Carlyle and John Lyall.

BLAST FROM THE PAST (12): Ingenious comedy about a man (Brendan Fraser) released after 35 years in a nuclear bunker. He 1950s values make him look mystical, mad, and blindingly naive in the sleazy 1980s. Bill Kelly directs.

BEYOND SILENCE (12): Plucky performance can't save this a tortuous front through German soap in which a young girl tries to get a life beyond her profoundly deaf parents. Caroline Link directs.

THE NIGHT OF THE HUNTER (12): Charles Laughton's one and only stab at directing is a Tom Sawyer versus Sweeney Todd nightmare. Robert Minkoff's crooked preacher

is unforgettable. An absolute classic 1958 best movie. **AUGUST IN THE WATER (CA):** You could bring Sogo into the surreal Japanese science fiction in the Tale. It's a beautiful, marvellous look at a city cursed by drought and a mysterious epidemic that turns the gulls to stone. Disney.

GODS AND MONSTERS (15): Ian McKellen exerts as a legendary horror movie director who grows his garden. (Brendan Fraser) for a while far darker than that of over-muscled escort. Bill Condon directs.

AMERICAN HISTORY X (15): Edward Norton is ferociously compelling as a white supremacist convinced in Tony Kaye's lavish, controversial but doomed attempt to get under the skin of an American ideology.

PAYBACK (15): Mel Gibson bleeds his way through Brian Koppelman's chummy thriller. With Gregg Kinnear, William Devane, James Coburn and Kris Kristofferson.

THE RUBEN'S MOVIE (U): Painless, big cartoon adventure in which fating toddlers bond in a spooky forest. Way enough for adults: an unreluctant necessity for three to eight-year-olds.

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LAW

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Cherie Booth, QC, with Pamela Phelps after the High Court awarded Ms Phelps damages because her local education authority failed to spot her dyslexia

Lost chances: who pays?

Anna Collins, an adoption administrator, has been struggling to get her 14-year-old dyslexic son, Andrew, a good education since he was at junior school. Her local education authority (LEA) in East London disagrees with an independent psychologist's assessment that he has organisational problems and suffers from the wild and number blindness condition.

"Andrew used to have tantrums and couldn't remember things properly," Ms Collins says. "After a started secondary school, he took him to the Dyslexia Institute, which diagnosed the condition."

The education authority eventually agreed to offer six hours a week of support on top of mainstream schooling, but after a few months, Ms Collins says, this broke down. There is now a dispute between the LEA and Mr Collins over what sort of schooling is appropriate. Ms Collins wants to take the education authority to court. "People like us have nowhere else to go except court," she says. "We can't afford to pay thousands of pounds a year for specialist schooling."

Yet as the law stands, even if an LEA psychologist or other professionals have been negli-

Many parents who seek special education for their children have to go to court. **Danny Lee reports**

gent in assessing a child's needs, the authority may not be held liable to pay compensation for lost chances in life. Jack Rabinowitz, a partner of Teacher Stern & Selby, says: "Hundreds of similar claims are waiting to go to court."

Mr Rabinowitz acts for Pamela Phelps, a 25-year-old dyslexic, who last November saw the Court of Appeal overturn the £46,650 damages the High Court had awarded her in a landmark ruling when she claimed that her local authority had been negligent for failing to identify her dyslexia. Her action, which is awaiting leave to appeal to the Lords, is the pivot on which all the other cases turn.

Meanwhile, the law has been left in a state of confusion. Mr Rabinowitz says: "I hope the House of Lords will clarify whether you can sue in these sorts of cases. But the other strand to this is the right to education under the Human Rights Act, which seems to suggest that even if the Lords say that people can't sue, under the Act they may be entitled to sue in any event."

Central to the reversal of the

High Court's decision was Lord Justice Stuart-Smith's ruling that the trial judge "had not asked himself whether [the psychologist] had voluntarily assumed responsibility for advising [Phelps] through her parents. Her duty was to advise the school and the local education authority. Merely because [Phelps] was the object of that advice and the parents were told what the advice was, did not amount to such an assumption of responsibility."

"The court ought to be slow to superimpose on a duty which the employee owed to his employer, a further duty towards the plaintiff, in the absence of very clear evidence that the employee had undertaken such responsibility."

Ms Collins had been given hope by the High Court decision in the Phelps case in September 1997, a ruling that had broken new ground in finding that the educational psychologist employed by the local authority owed a duty of care to the pupil she assessed. Even if that decision is reinstated, people who have suffered from undiagnosed dyslexia will not automatically be able to sue. It is accepted across the board that dyslexia is a developing issue and schools cannot reasonably be expected to have always known about it.

John Morrell, a Vizards partner who mainly defends in such cases and acts for the LEA in the Phelps case, takes a pragmatic view. "Are we all going to be entitled to blame someone for what happened 20 or 30 years ago?" he says. He highlights another problem with liability in dyslexia and similar cases. "How can you establish that any failure on the educational psychologist's part led to loss?"

Establishing causation and quantifying loss should not prevent a person being able to make a claim, according to John Davis, a partner at Irwin Mitchell. He says: "In looking at the loss in general terms, dyslexia cases are no different from many other actions, such as medical negligence claims for failed surgery."

Mr Davis is acting for 19-year-old Hannah Dwyer, who is suing the £8,000-a-year

Workshop College for negligence in failing to recognise her dyslexia. He points out that although suing a fee-paying school introduces a contractual element into the claim, possibly avoiding the need to show a duty of care, the arguments about causation and the questions of what the person would have become had the dyslexia been properly dealt with remain the same. The Phelps case will, therefore, be highly significant for Ms Dwyer.

Although it will be even more relevant to Ms Collins, it may be too late. She says: "We now have only 18 months left for Andrew to make up for seven years."

E-mail: lawpage@the-times.co.uk

Silk should not be cut but overseen by the Bar

On Maundy Thursday the Lord Chancellor, Lord Irvine of Lairg, made his annual announcement of which lawyers have been promoted to the rank of Queen's Counsel. There are few more pleasurable moments in a barrister's career than appointment as a QC. And there are few more dismal experiences than opening a letter of rejection from the Lord Chancellor. But whether or not they have been awaiting judgment on their application, lawyers are finding it increasingly difficult to justify a system by which distinction in a profession is determined by a government minister.

Each year about 500 barristers (and a few solicitors who specialise in advocacy) apply to be made a QC (or to "take silk"). About 70 applicants are successful, receiving letters patent confirming that they are "learned in the law" and conferring the right to sit in the front row in court. There may be other incidental benefits: the 1979 Royal Commission on Legal Services suggested that "some support their applications for silk with medical certificates emphasising the need for a reduction in their workload".

Sir William Holdsworth explained in *A History of English Law* that Elizabeth I appointed the first Queen's Counsel, including Francis Bacon, to assist the attorney-general in giving legal advice to the monarch. During the 18th century, selection as a Queen's (or King's) Counsel became, as Lord Watson suggested in a Privy Council judgment in 1897, "in the nature of an honour or dignity", a recognition of "professional eminence". In 1920 the last remaining historical link with the original purpose of the honour was removed: a KC no longer had to obtain permission before accepting a brief to appear against the Crown. Today the only link with the monarch is that newly appointed silks are invited to a royal garden party at Buckingham Palace.

The system of appointment of silks has been greatly improved in recent years. Decisions are no longer made by reference to irrelevant factors, as at the beginning of the 19th century when Lord Eldon is said to have delayed the appointment of Brougham and Denham because they had acted for Queen Caroline. The procedure has been made more open, with wider consultation, and with published criteria for selection, so removing some of the more objectionable features of a system memorably described in 1992 by the then Chairman of the Bar, Gareth Williams, QC (now Lord Williams of Mostyn, a minister in the Home Office), as

based on "the Franz Kafka school of business management".

Mistakes are still made, both in appointing unworthy candidates and in rejecting meritorious applicants. Happily, however, the Lord Chancellor's Department (LCD) has avoided any repetition of the 1993 disaster when two counsel with the same surname applied for silk, one was successful and one unsuccessful, and each was sent the letter intended for the other.

Andrew Dismore, a Labour MP, is leading a campaign to abolish the rank of Queen's Counsel. He contends that it is an "anachronistic distinction" that serves only to "give lawyers more money" at public expense, because it is the State that pays the cost of administering the appointments system. There are no "Queen's Dentists", so why should there be Queen's Counsel?

Lawyers, and the public, should oppose any suggestion of abolishing a mark of expertise that assists solicitors and clients to identify those barristers who are capable of handling the more difficult cases and that helps the LCD when assessing candidates for judicial office. Mr Dismore's complaint that some of those chosen are not up to the job simply recognises the universal truth that any system which depends on human judgment will inevitably involve mistakes — even, on rare occasions, in the selection of MPs. Concern about the higher fees charged by QCs ignores the inevitability in a market economy that the best barristers will be in greater demand and will charge accordingly. As to Mr Dismore's complaint

about the expense of administering the system, the Bar Council has agreed in principle to bear that burden. Though the rank of QC should not be abolished, there is a strong case for removing the role of a government department in the making of appointments. The Bar values its independence. It is, then, difficult to justify a system by which promotion to a senior status is dependent on the advice of civil servants and the decision of a politician, however wide the consultation. The Bar itself should decide the relevant policies, criteria and procedures, and should create an appointments panel consisting of eminent lawyers and distinguished non-lawyers to determine which applications should be approved. The rank of Queen's Counsel could and should be replaced by a rank of Senior Counsel.

● The author is a practising barrister and a Fellow of All Souls College, Oxford.



David Pannick QC

Employees under surveillance

The monitoring of staff needs regulation, says **Alison Clarke**

STREET surveillance and television monitoring shops are part of modern life. But when an employer uses such means to watch staff without their knowledge, the law surrounding it becomes murky.

In a recent case, Tom Spamer, the Union branch secretary at Leeds Metropolitan University, represented two cleaners and a security officer in disciplinary hearings after they were monitored by hidden cameras installed by the university. His members found out about the surveillance only after they were arrested and suspended from work for alleged drug-dealing. Mr Spamer said that no evidence was found to support the allegations. He is critical of employers who do not tell staff that they are being



Does new technology invade privacy?

watched... although most forms of electronic monitoring are legitimate.

In 1997 the European Court ruled that under the European Convention on Human Rights, Alison Halford, a senior police officer, had her right to privacy infringed by her employer's interception of private telephone calls that she made from her office.

But Michael Ford, a barrister who recently wrote a report on surveillance and

privacy at work for the Institute of Employment Rights, is sceptical about application of the Convention in the workplace. He says: "It would not be safe to rely on the incorporation of the [Convention] to offer protection against anything other than the most blatant forms of infringement of privacy at work, not least because the term 'privacy' is so ill-defined. The more workers are subject to constant intrusive surveillance, the harder it becomes to contend that they have a reasonable expectation of privacy."

The law cannot embrace all the issues to which surveillance may give rise. What is acceptable in one workplace — CCTV for the protection of transport workers, for example — might be intrusive in another. Despite these caveats, Mr Ford does not think that the law is generally powerless. "Legislation can address specific problems and specific practices which infringe aspects of autonomy," he says. "The Data Protection Act 1998 is a welcome example, extending the opportunities for workers and their unions to find out what information is being kept on them and how it is being used."

Collective bargaining is, Mr Ford contends, the best way of regulating surveillance with a little help from the law. But he believes that employers will continue to have a more or less unconstrained right to introduce new surveillance technologies in the workplace.

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Assistant Recorder Appointments
Judicial Group Division 1
Lord Chancellor's Department
Selborne House
54/60 Victoria Street
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(e-mail: jag.lcdhq@gnet.gov.uk)

The estimated number of vacancies will not be settled until much later in the process. However, vacancies are expected to arise on all Circuits.

Each applicant may apply in respect of one Circuit only and completed application forms must be returned by noon on the following dates:

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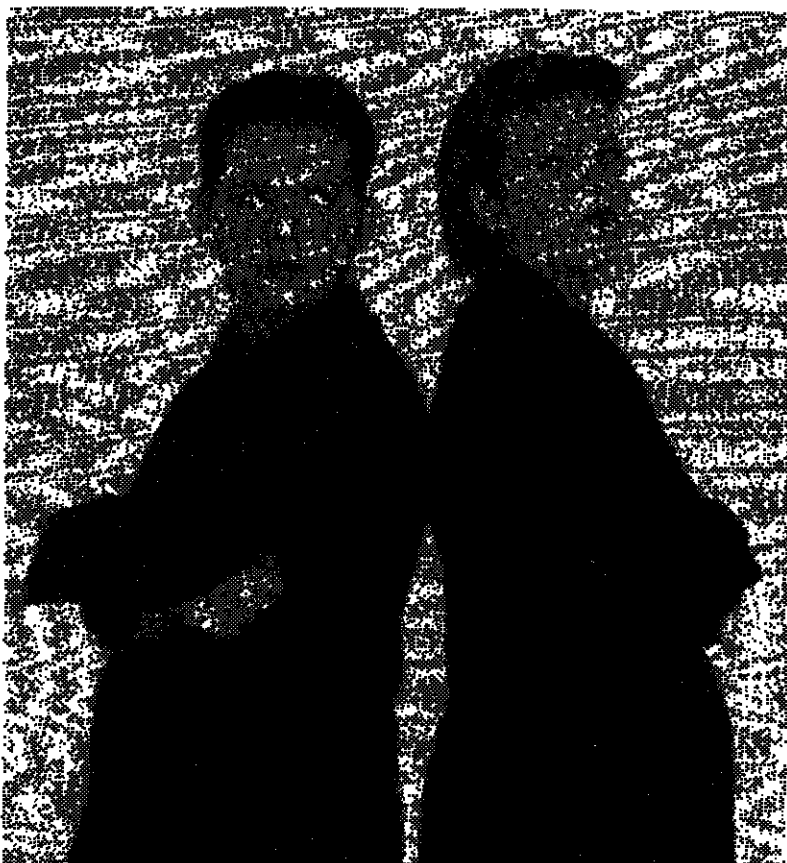
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Closing date for applications is 20th April 1999.

CLIFFORD CHANCE

Time to get to grips with late payers

Henrietta Lake says small firms are still facing problems despite publication of worst offenders

The naming and shaming of public companies last week in league tables showing how long it took them to pay their bills was a useful step towards improving the culture of late payment that grips the UK and cripples so many businesses.

Small and medium-sized firms, 6,000 of which went to the wall last year because of late payment, are being encouraged to refer to the tables before they start doing business with a new customer.

The fact that so many companies, such as Bovis Homes and Staveley Industries to name but two, have been so eager to justify their poor ranking and explain away their payment delays shows that the Federation of Small Businesses, which published the tables, is succeeding in putting late payment of debts higher up the agenda of larger quoted companies.

However, the companies, over 6,000 of them, that should really be hanging their heads in shame are the ones not in the league table at all. Since March 1997, companies have been obliged to disclose in their annual report the average time it takes them to pay their bills, but companies such as Tesco, Zeneca, GEC and Glaxo were nowhere to be seen. The league tables also aim

to reinforce the new legislation on late payment, which gives small firms with fewer than 50 employees the right to charge interest on late payment.

However, Andrew Godfrey, of Grant Thornton, the accountant, said: "The late payment legislation is frankly an irrelevance."

He added: "In order to tackle the problem better, smaller companies need to pay more attention to their procedures."

Research has shown that over one third of small and medium-sized companies do not have contracts with the people they do business with.

Peter Rowe, chairman of the Institute of Credit Management (ICM), said: "If you haven't got a contract that includes payment terms, how can you possibly expect people to pay you on time?"

Discussion of the payment terms should be part of the initial negotiation over price and delivery with the customer. For goods and services that are paid for quickly, companies might consider charging a lower price. "Make payment terms and stick to them. Invoice quickly and accurately after delivery," said Mr Rowe.

Appollonius Nooten-Boom, managing director of Hean Studios, which makes gold and platinum hinges for jewelry, says most of his bills are paid late. However, the Herefordshire family business, which has 16 employees, uses a surcharge to spur clients to action. He says: "I find that the surcharge of 2 per cent on invoices which are a week late usually brings in an influx of cheques."

Mr Rowe still recommends the traditional credit check before starting business. Experts also give warning of the danger in overselling. Many firms are now involving their salespeople in the collection of debt and not paying their sales commission until the money is in the bank.

BT runs a course on how to conduct credit management over the telephone, and The Better Payment Practice Group is to launch a series of nationwide seminars on credit management in June. They say it is important to find out the name of the person that authorises the cheques and to try to get to know them.

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Appollonius Nooten-Boom says using a surcharge usually brings an influx of cheques

Varied past is a help

By Henrietta Lake

THE capacity to turn ideas into money does not necessarily come from dedicating a life to one profession.

Many entrepreneurs, such as Howard Hodgson, who went from undertaking to cigarette lighters, have enjoyed varied careers that have contributed to their success.



Philip Stanley, founder of Nationwide Cellular Fit, and an entrant to the Entrepreneur of the Year competition, believes that his experiences in different professions have helped him to understand his customers and to produce a sought-after product.

PricewaterhouseCoopers, the accountant, which helped to attract venture-capital backing.

The dynamic growth of the firm is largely down to its founder's irreverent approach to business: "I'm not a details man. I try to concentrate on the strategy and have a great team that mops up after me."

ERIC PEARCE, a retired businessman living in Hertfordshire, acts as a "business angel" and adviser to local small businesses. He says small firms deserve a better service from their banks.

"I find the attitude of the main British clearing banks particularly galling when you compare it with the service offered to small businesses in many other countries."

"Banks here go on about all the firms they have helped to get off the ground, but the reality is that they lend at such ridiculously high rates for a guaranteed fast return with about three or four times cover for the amount borrowed."

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CHANGING TIMES

THE FACTS

P&O market capitalisation: £5.762 billion.

Sales: £5.912 billion in 1998.

Pre-tax profits: £368.9 million in 1998.

Overview: P&O is a diversified business taking in ferries, cruises, ports and logistics, cargo shipping, construction and property. The group has recently announced a restructuring programme that will eventually limit it to the first three activities.

THE BOARD

Lord Sterling of Plaistow, 64, chairman. Is an Elder Brother of Trinity House.

Sir Bruce McPhail, 59, managing director. An MBA of Harvard Business School. Formerly with Price Waterhouse and Hill Samuel.

Tim Harris, 51, assistant managing director since 1995, responsible for cruises and chief executive of P&O Nedlloyd.

Grasme Dunlop, 56, responsible for ferries.

Michael Gordon, 39, legal director and company secretary.

Tim Harding, 58, responsible for property activities.

Richard Hain, 63, chairman and managing director of P&O Australia.

Sir Frank Lampi, 72, chairman of Bovis.

Nick Luff, 32, the finance director.

Peter Ratcliffe, 51, president of Princess Cruises.

Robert Woods, 52, managing director of P&O Nedlloyd.

P&O's non-executive directors are:

Lord Hambro, 68. Senior non-executive director. Chairman of Guardian Royal Exchange and of the Royal National Pension Fund for Nurses.

Peter Fry, 58. Former managing director of McKinsey Co (UK) and former chairman of Baring Brothers International. Director of PepsiCo and of Omnicom.

Rodney Galpin, 67. Chairman of Alpha Airports, director of Capital Shopping Centres.

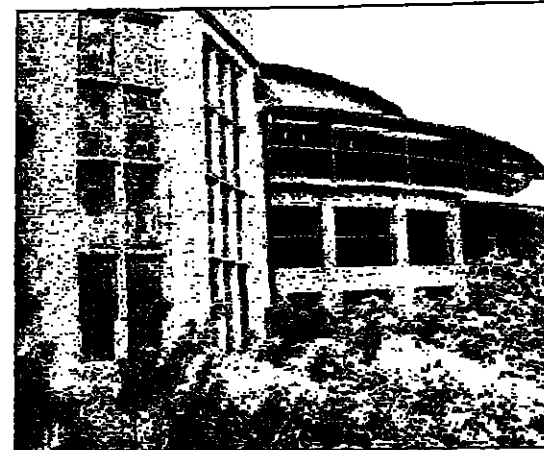
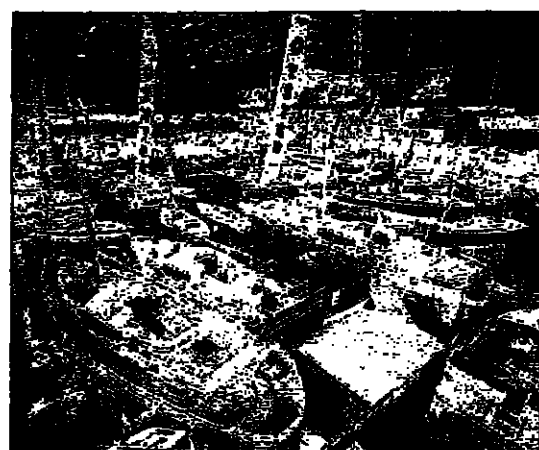
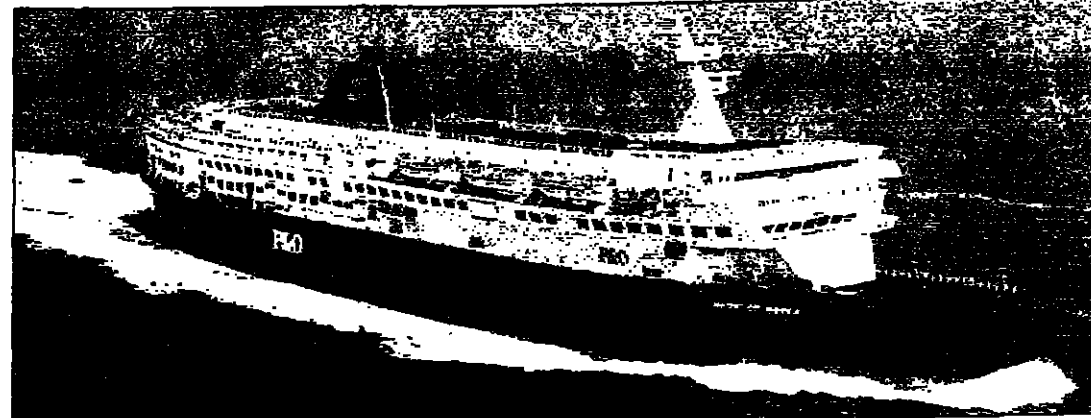
Sir John Collins, 57. Chief executive of the Vestey Group, non-executive chairman of National Power, non-executive director of NM Rothschild & Sons and of Stoll Moss Theatres. Director of the London Symphony Orchestra.

Baroness Hogg, 52, chairman, London Economics.

CORPORATE PROFILE: P&O



P&O, where Lord Sterling is chairman, is to return to its roots and concentrate on cruises, ferries, ports and logistics. On the disposal block are Bovis Construction, manager for the building of the new Glyndebourne Opera House, and the Earls Court Olympia exhibition centre, home of the Boat Show



sprawling for its own good, at a time when conglomerates were out of favour.

There was also criticism that Sterling and McPhail were insufficiently responsive to the views of big City shareholders. The shares were in the doldrums — they have underperformed the FTSE all-share index by 30 per cent over the past five years, not helped by the recession of the early 1990s, which hit industrial groups such as P&O, with its huge containerised shipping operations, especially hard.

On March 23 this year, when unveiling P&O's 1998 results, Sterling announced a return to its shipping roots. The property portfolio would be gradually sold, as would the Earls Court Olympia exhibition business — 43 acres of prime land in Central London, in the books at £180 million but worth, analysts suggest, nearer to £350 million. Alternatively, the UK investment property interests, with a book value of £650 million, could be demerged as a free-standing quoted property company.

P&O Nedlloyd, a joint venture half-owned by a Dutch shipping group in which P&O has £450 million tied up, would be floated, offering a possibility that P&O would sell all or part of its stake. The Bovis construction management business would also be floated, to follow Bovis Homes, which last year joined the stock market at £226 million.

P&O shares rose 5 per cent on news of this unbundling. The sale proceeds, even before anything from the Nedlloyd float, could total £2 billion. This would allow shareholders

who had stayed in while the shares were underperforming to be rewarded for their patience, possibly with a share buyback or a special dividend.

The disposals would slim P&O back to its three core businesses of ports, ferries and cruises, the last being by far the biggest, and would leave it with no borrowings. "That makes absolutely clear what the company is about," says Sterling. The new focus, it is hoped, will mean a rerating of the shares close to the high lev-

els, in some cases 25 times current earnings, enjoyed by "pure" shipping companies in the US and elsewhere.

All three core divisions earn 15 per cent return on capital employed. "Where's the company going?" asks Sterling. "When the mists of what's happening in the Far East start to clear, and some of them are starting to already, there will be an increase in world trade in years to come."

"This leads to creation of a massive increase in wealth in world terms. People have the time as well as the increased wealth and are spending it on travel. We are uniquely placed to take advantage of that."

Sterling refuses to be drawn on what P&O will do with the disposal proceeds not needed for investment in core activities. He says: "Once we've brought this in, we would have to look at whether the capital structure... would need to be addressed. Do you buy in shares? Could you give the money back to shareholders?" However, he insists that one big shareholder has already suggested that if P&O can keep investing and earning 15

per cent, it would sooner the company held onto the money.

The City's concern is not the wisdom of the proposed moves but the length of time they took to be decided on once it became clear that P&O was becalmed. There is also a question over what should happen to the property assets: property shares currently trade at a discount to assets. However, a gradual sale would take much longer to benefit investors than a demerger. It is, the stock market accepts, impossible yet to say which course would be best.

Sterling is unrepentant about the time taken to decide to return P&O to its maritime roots. In the 1990s recession, he says, P&O spent billions of pounds on the cruise business to compete with the best in the world. "It would have been impossible to do that without the real estate side — this was the bank that funded it," he said.

"The real estate side is no longer the essential it was in providing the streams of income needed. But we got no brownie points whatsoever for the success of the real estate division; even though it's helped us build the company, I don't

think it made one jot of difference to our share price."

There remain some profits still to come from existing property developments, especially in the US. By book value, P&O has £1.1 billion in investment property and £30 million in sites to develop.

Sterling denies any disenchantment with the City, but says: "We're having to run the company and they are sitting where they are. We're just as disappointed in how the share price has been of late."

The problem, Sterling feels, is that P&O has disappointed before — this may help to explain why most analysts' break-up value exceeds its share price. In 1993 and 1994, P&O was seen as a recovery stock, a promise not fulfilled. "One isn't saying one hasn't made mistakes," Sterling says. "On the whole, one has enjoyed enormous support. We lost a certain amount for a while, though not that of our major shareholders. It looked as if we had lost a sense of direction."

However, he adds: "If you go back five years and think what the atmosphere was like... you would have been flogging off assets at half their present values."

At 64, Sterling might reasonably be thinking of retirement, especially after 16 years at the helm. However, he insists he will drive P&O into the next century. There are certainly no plans for a successor. "I don't think I'm decrepit yet," Sterling says. "Bruce McPhail is a superb managing director. The three key divisions are represented by senior directors on the board. The finance director is the youngest in the FTSE. The inner circle is all in place."

P&O scores well on executive pay, with Sterling's £1.1 million fitting for his experience and non-executive directors slightly underpaid, according to the Crisp consultancy. However, on ethical policy, Integrity Works questions whether business principles should be left to individual companies.

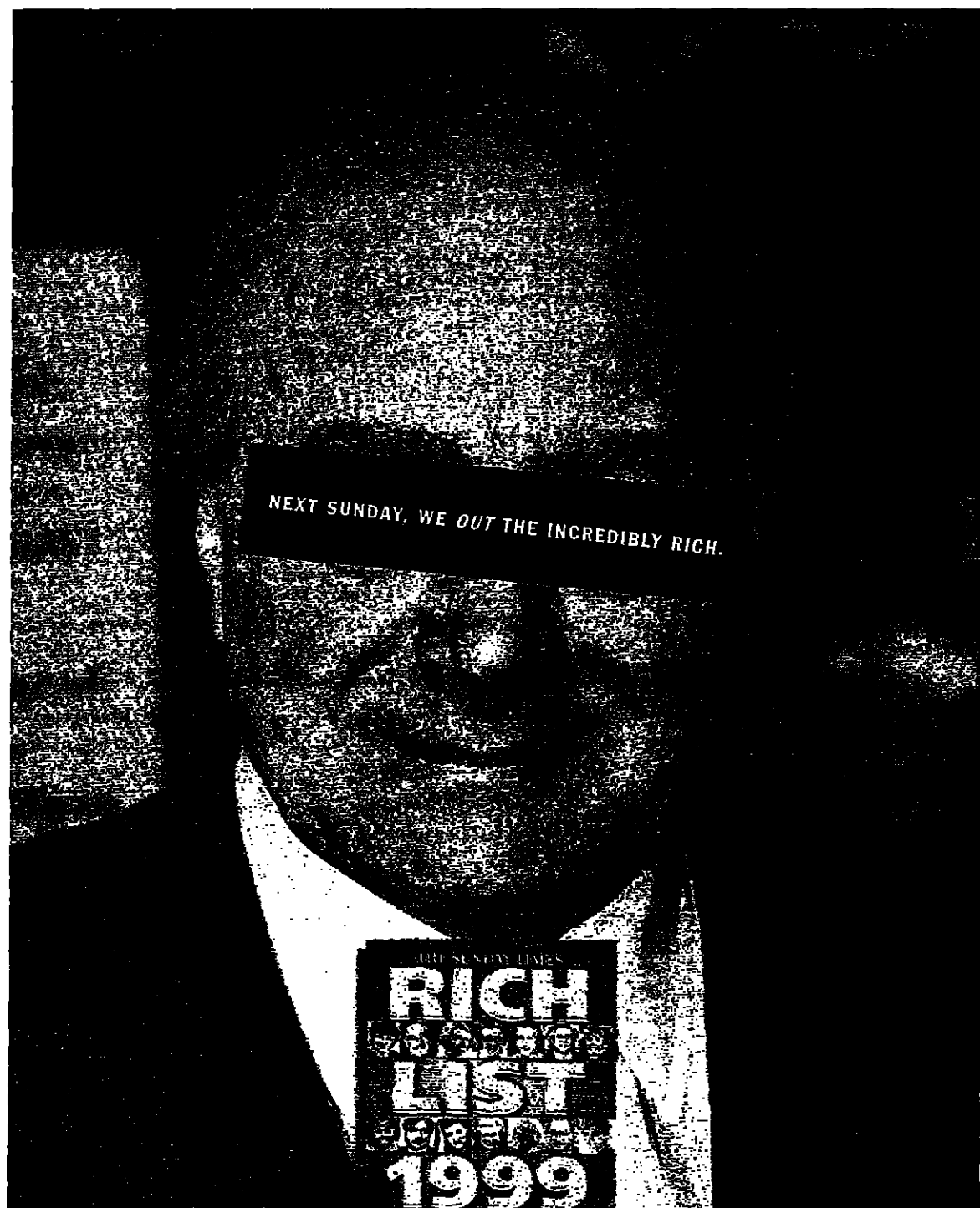
MARTIN WALLER

OUR VERDICT

Ethical expression.....	5/10
Far-out quotient.....	9/10
Financial record.....	7/10
Share performance.....	5/10
Attitude to staff.....	8/10
Strength of brand.....	8/10
Innovation.....	7/10
Annual report.....	8/10
City star rating.....	7/10
Future prospects.....	8/10
Total.....	72/100

Ethical expression is evaluated by Integrity Works. The far-out quotient, in which best boardroom pay practice scores highest, is provided by Crisp Consultancy.

THE SUNDAY TIMES



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Russia to reopen talks with IMF on foreign debt

FROM A CORRESPONDENT IN MOSCOW

RUSSIAN officials will resume talks with the International Monetary Fund mission tomorrow as Moscow strives to secure the funding needed to meet foreign debt obligations of \$17.5 billion (£11 billion) this year.

Negotiations with the IMF are expected to last about two weeks and cover technical details of policies underpinning possible new IMF credits for Russia. The IMF mission follows a visit last week by Michel Camdessus, the IMF managing director.

Russia's talks with the IMF have made slow progress since last year's economic crisis torpedoed a previous loan programme.

Yevgeny Primakov, the Russian Prime Minister, says new IMF credits are essential for Russia to meet its foreign debt obligations.

The Government wants new IMF credits so that it can re-

pay about \$4.5 billion which it owes the Fund itself. IMF support will also open the door to restructuring talks with other creditors.

The IMF mission is expected to complete its work before a meeting of the Group of Seven industrial nations on April 24.

The G7 talks will take place in Washington during the spring meetings of the IMF and World Bank, but a decision on Russian credits by the IMF board is not expected until later.

In Moscow the IMF mission will first analyse preliminary information about Russia's first-quarter budget performance. Talks with the Finance Ministry will only begin on Friday when the mission will formulate its proposals and make comments on the information presented to it. The size of new credits will be discussed no earlier than next week.

Unions welcome task force for manufacturing

BY OUR INDUSTRIAL STAFF

UNIONS yesterday welcomed government plans to set up a high-level task force to champion the interests of manufacturing.

The establishment of a task force by Stephen Byers, the Trade and Industry Secretary, follows persistent criticism by industry of the Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee.

High interest rates, which have contributed to the strength of the pound against other leading currencies, have been blamed by manufacturers for the loss of thousands of jobs. Exports have suffered badly as British goods have been priced out of the market.

The task force, which will be constituted later this year, is expected to feature leaders of the Trades Union Congress and senior representatives from the Confederation of British Industry, the Engi-

neering Employers' Federation and the Chemical Industries Association. Its formation will be preceded by a summit meeting of union leaders and captains of industry.

Roger Lyons, general secretary of the MSF union, who is likely to be invited to join the task force, welcomed its formation. He said previous governments had ignored the plight of industry and excluded unions from the formulation of economic policy.

He said: "Establishing the task force is obviously not the end of manufacturing difficulties. The value of the pound and interest rates nearly double that of the eurozone are causing many companies serious problems. But it is a significant step in the right direction and shows the Government is serious about partnership in business."

Fortune 500's seven-year hitch

FROM A CORRESPONDENT IN NEW YORK

PROFITS of the Fortune 500 companies declined for the first time in seven years in 1998, as US companies suffered the effects of the economic crisis in Asia, Russia and Latin America.

Overall, profits for the 500 fell 1.8 per cent last year, compared with 7.8 per cent earnings growth in 1997, according to Fortune magazine's annual listing of the largest US public companies. Revenue growth shrank to 4 per cent from 7 per cent in 1997 as companies found demand for their products and services stifled by the continuing financial problems overseas.

While 1998 will not be remembered for its stellar profits, the magazine said, it will likely mark the beginning of the end of the dominance of blue chips such as General



Jack Smith saw GM retain top spot for the 11th year running

Motors and Coca-Cola. Younger companies, such as Microsoft, Cisco Systems and Dell are wielding more influence in corporate America, Fortune said.

Fortune said that 1998 "will probably be considered a watershed year, the year when the

new economy fundamentally parted ways with the old and high-tech consolidated its role as the driving force behind the growth of big business."

GM, where Jack Smith is chairman and chief executive officer, remained No 1 on the list — which ranks companies

according to revenue — for the eleventh year, running. GM had \$161.3 billion in revenue, followed by Ford with \$144.4 billion, Wal-Mart with \$139.2 billion, Exxon with \$101.7 billion and General Electric with \$100.5 billion.

Cisco jumped 61 places from 253 to 192, while Dell Computer shot up from 125th place to 78th.

Other high-tech companies that have become darlings of Wall Street recently have not yet made the list. While the stock prices of the online auctioneer eBay, Internet service provider AllHome and online bookseller Amazon.com have given them market capitalisations surpassing many Fortune 500 firms, they have yet to generate significant revenues, let alone profits. The company that ranked 500th, the container maker Ball Corp, had nearly \$2.9 billion in revenue.

Takeover talk is foundation of Revlon's recovery



Perelman: silent on rumours

FROM ANDREW BUTCHER
IN NEW YORK

TAKEOVER speculation sent shares in Revlon's debt-laden Revlon cosmetics business soaring more than 50 per cent in a two-day buying frenzy recently, but a suitor is yet to emerge.

In fact, a week after the sudden purple patch for Revlon's struggling share price, it remains uncertain whether Mr Perelman's 53 per cent stake in the company is even up for sale. Regardless, the surge in Revlon shares has added near-

ly \$400 million (£240 million) to Mr Perelman's fortunes, at least on paper.

Speculative buying pushed daily turnover of Revlon's shares to 30 times the average daily level of the past three months and the shares have stayed well above their previous depressed levels.

Unilever, the Anglo-Dutch group that makes Elizabeth Arden cosmetics, and America's Procter & Gamble were touted as potential buyers but both refused to comment on the speculation. Shiseido, the Japanese group, was also said to be in-

terested in Revlon to help it to break into the US market. Unilever remains the favourite to start any takeover bid.

Although no buyer has announced a bid, that is no reason to think that Revlon is not in play. Shares in companies in which Mr Perelman has a big stake have a habit of wildly gyrating in the days before critical announcements. It has happened at Revlon. Consolidated Cigar, Sunbeam and Coleman in the past year. There is no suggestion of any wrongdoing by Mr Perelman.

In spite of the interest Mr Perelman has made no effort to confirm or deny the rumours that Revlon is in play. Revlon has certainly not been Mr Perelman's best investment. He bought it for \$1.7 billion in 1985 in a highly leveraged purchase using funds raised by Michael Milken, who pleaded guilty to securities fraud five years later.

While much of the stock market has soared recently, Revlon's stock has been a distinct underperformer. Its sales are slipping and it is saddled with considerable debt. Revlon is struggling to lift

its profits in the crowded make-up industry in the US, while it tries to cope with economic problems in overseas markets. It gets more than a third of its income from outside America, so currency falls have added to the sales woes in Asia, Russia and South America.

The cosmetics company recently added Sarah O'Hare, the Australian model, to its stable of corporate spokesmen. It already boasts Cindy Crawford, the supermodel, and large-size model Emme. In January, with profits slumping 82 per cent, Revlon an-

nounced 1,000 to 1,200 job cuts, equal to 7 per cent of its workforce.

Mr Perelman is generally considered New York's richest resident, but his stock holdings were pounded last year and dropped in value by about \$2.5 billion. It left him worth about \$3.5 billion.

Despite financial strife at Revlon, his investments have recovered some of their lost ground this year. After this week's gains, Revlon has virtually doubled from its 1998 low, but remains less than half the value it was at its peak.

GTE to acquire wireless assets

GTE, the US telecoms company, yesterday agreed to buy about half of Ameritech's wireless properties in US Midwestern states for about \$3.27 billion (£2 billion). The assets being acquired include 1.7 million subscribers, GTE said.

The acquisition involves properties that Ameritech must divest as part of its proposed merger with SBC Communications. Bell Atlantic, which has agreed to a merger of equals with GTE, has given its consent to the deal.

Late last week reports said that William Kennard, chairman of the US Federal Communications Commission, sent a letter to Ameritech and SBC expressing serious concerns about the proposed merger of the two regional telecommunications providers.

The letter reportedly suggested that the FCC would impose strict conditions in the event that SBC's proposed \$56 billion acquisition of Ameritech is approved.

Online trades soar

US investors funnelled stock trades through the Internet at a record pace in the first quarter, and online trading volumes rose by up to 35 per cent to about 450,000 trades a day from the fourth quarter, according to analysts at CS First Boston. The surge in online trading volumes came despite overall market volumes rising just under 5 per cent from the fourth quarter. The rise means that Web brokers processed an average of 440,000 to 460,000 trades a day in the first quarter and continue to pick off market share from traditional brokers. Shares of online brokers jumped yesterday, with AmeriTrade adding \$6.44 to a record \$69, E*Trade up \$3.13 to \$63 and Schwab up \$3.25 to \$97.

Tie Rack set to rise

Shares of Tie Rack are expected to rise today after reports that the specialist retailer is in talks with Ferria, the privately owned Italian clothing manufacturer. The companies are believed to have discussed an offer of 40p a share, valuing the business at about £25 million. The shares closed at 35p on Thursday, the previous trading day, having plunged since their 1997 high of more than 200p.

Regulator wants gas power station moratorium lifted

BY CHRISTINE BUCKLEY, INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

CALLUM McCARTHY, the energy regulator, has attacked the Government's block on new gas power stations, calling for its immediate removal. Mr McCarthy, who is pursuing a strong campaign against profiteering by the generators, blames the moratorium for hampering competition in the industry. It was introduced to protect the market for coal as the mining industry lurched towards a massive decline.

He told *The Times*: "Anyone with the statutory responsibilities given to me cannot be a supporter of the moratorium... I would like to see it removed forthwith because we have a duty to promote competition, and this is an impediment to competition."

The block, while helping coal, also shields the three main coal-burning generators from new competitors. Last year the Government ordered National Power and PowerGen to sell power stations in order to counter this and to stimulate competition. But Mr McCarthy has since been angered by what he considers to be gaming in the electricity market which has forced up the price of power.

The regulator, who has been overseeing the electricity industry since January, says that the generators will face quickie licence amendments to prohibit

price rises if their charges do not fall. Mr McCarthy also dismissed the claims made for the generators that electricity prices have fallen. "At the moment it is manifest that we haven't got a genuinely competitive generation sector. When you look over ten years at the huge falling away in input prices and you look at what has happened to output prices, that mismatch is completely incompatible with genuine competition."

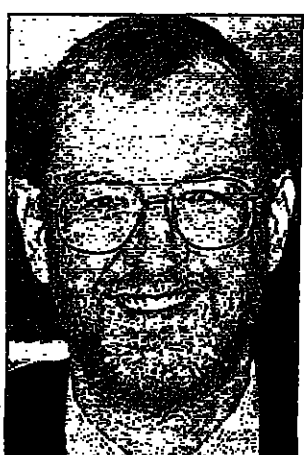
There has been a 30 per cent fall in prices. Some seem to suggest that is something the generators have done but that fall has come from the reduction in the non-fossil fuel obligation (with the withdrawal of the levy

for nuclear energy) from tighter controls on distribution and supply, and from the last of the coal contracts.

Mr McCarthy is determined to push down electricity prices below the level envisaged by the Government in its energy review. When the review began it was predicted that prices could fall by 10 per cent once the electricity trading arrangements have been overhauled.

The regulator is pushing for a quick shake-up of the power market and the scrapping of the controversial electricity pool — moves ordered by John Battle, the Energy Minister, in the energy review. His keenness was sharpened by the pool's cursory treatment of a senior official from Mr McCarthy's office at a meeting earlier this year.

But he concedes that the overhaul — never likely to be easy, given the myriad of interested parties — could hit legislative delays. If the Utilities Regulation Bill goes into the next Queen's Speech then legislation will not follow until late next year. Similarly, if the moves are attempted by licence changes and the companies object and force a Monopolies and Mergers Commission inquiry, then the process will drag on for as long, if not longer. April 2000 is the target date for the reforms.



Battle: seeks reforms



Wyndham's is one of Chesterfield's eight West End theatres. They are being valued as part of a plan to sell assets

Chesterfield sites to be valued

BY MARTIN BARROW

CHESTERFIELD PROPERTIES has appointed advisers to value its entertainment division as part of a plan to sell its assets and return the proceeds to shareholders.

The group has appointed Investec to value the division, which has eight West End theatres. These include Wyndham's and the Donmar Warehouse, a theatre production company and a film and television distribution arm.

Since announcing a possible corporate restructuring in February Chesterfield has received a bid approach from Quintain Estates and Development. Quintain said it would sell all the London properties, including the entertainment division, to Benchmark Group. Roger Wingate, a former chairman of Chesterfield and now chief executive as well as its largest shareholder, has expressed an interest in bidding for the division but firm proposals have yet to be announced.

The winding-up of Chesterfield was wel-

comed in the City, where institutional investors have put pressure on the management of smaller property companies to consolidate. But progress has been slow, complicated by the bid approach. There has also been disquiet about the role of Robert Maxted, the former chief executive. He was expected to join GE Capital, which has agreed to acquire a £93.5 million property portfolio from Chesterfield. At an extraordinary meeting last month the board requested more time to bring about the restructuring.

BBC deal boosts US audience

BBC AMERICA, the subscription television channel with programmes ranging from *Ballykissangel* to *EastEnders*, has doubled its distribution in the US through a deal with DIRECTV, the leading American satellite broadcaster (Raymond Snoddy writes).

DIRECTV will broadcast the BBC subscription channel to its 4.6 million digital satellite viewers all over the US. It means that the channel, carrying a wide range of BBC entertainment, will be available in just under nine million homes.

BBC America has found it difficult to get on to US cable networks because of the growing capacity problem, but DIRECTV broadcasts a total of 185 channels.

Rupert Gavin, chief executive of BBC Worldwide, said that the DIRECTV deal was a key part of a BBC global strategy to increase its portfolio of international channels.

BBC channels are now available in some form in 225 million homes worldwide.

BBC America is distributed by Discovery Networks as part of a global alliance between the two organisations.

Companies urged to appeal against rates

BY MARTIN BARROW

COMPANIES in England and Wales could be wasting up to £3 billion a year on rate payments, according to research published today.

At present just 40 per cent of all rating assessments are subject to an appeal. Yet nearly half the rateable properties in England and Wales, with a value of more than £16 billion, could find their rates reduced on appeal, according to Fletcher King, the property and construction services group.

The firm's research is based on national statistics regarding

the rateable value of all commercial property in the UK, measured against Fletcher King's own success rate in conducting rating appeals for its clients and the average reduction rate secured on appeal.

Bob Dickman, head of Fletcher King's rating division, said: "The fact that only 40 per cent of rating assessments on commercial properties are appealed in England and Wales is an astonishingly low figure when you consider the amount of money involved."

Fletcher King's own record

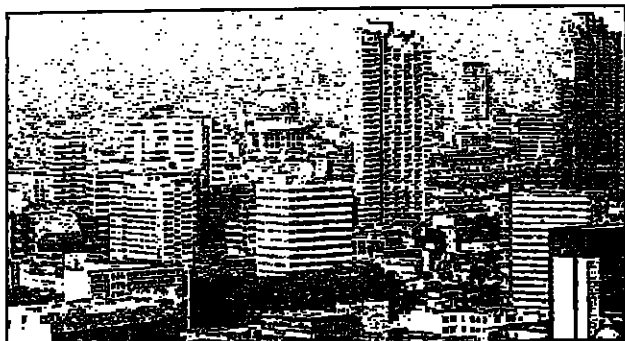
on appeals is that for every ten appeals made on behalf of clients eight are successful, securing an average reduction rate of 17 per cent.

Mr Dickman said: "If we use those figures as a benchmark it is clear that many property owners and occupiers are paying considerably more than they need on their rates."

Next year a new rating list will come into force. The effect of the revaluation on rateable value will depend on the type of property and its locality, but increases may be significant.

Analysts believe that prime Central London office assessments are likely to double, with the immediate effect on rate payments depending on what phasing provisions are made by the Government.

These could be similar to those that apply to the 1995 Rating List, where increases in rate liability for Central London offices with an assessment of more than £15,000 have their annual increases restricted to 10 per cent plus inflation.



Prime London office rate assessments are expected to double

Paul Durman offers reassurance over chief's CV

Azur board prepares to float

TONY MARTIN has an eye-catching CV, having worked for British Biotech, Celis International and Tegen Life Sciences — three biotechnology companies that have resolutely destroyed the value of the money that shareholders invested in them.

Dr Martin is about to try again with Azur Environmental, a water monitoring equipment firm that he hopes to float on Easdaq in June or July. He plans to raise \$20 million to fund expansion and expects Azur to be worth up to \$60 million.

The "scorched earth" that Dr Martin's career has left behind him is not as worrying as it looks. At British Biotech he ran the profitable genetic products arm for about five years, and left in 1992 — long before the origins of last year's controversy over its misleadingly optimistic assessments of its drugs. And he was chairman of Tegen for just a little more than a year. More troubling was his sacking as

chief executive of Celis in 1994, only nine months after Chris Evans's hygiene monitoring company was floated. Mark Clement, his finance director, publicly branded Dr Martin as "ineffectual", an early example of the flair of biotech firms to make a bad situation worse.

Dr Martin, who eventually won a handsome settlement from Celis, remains mystified by the episode. He said: "I still don't know to this day what led them, and Mark in particular, to say those things. I never detected any animosity and Mark had become almost a personal friend. I was very surprised by it all."

He became chairman and chief executive of Azur, then called Microbios, in June 1995, and raised \$15 million for the Californian-registered firm the following March. Azur is now based in Reading, although most of its 48 staff remain in the US.

Working closely with Yorkshire Water,

Azur has developed instruments that use freeze-dried bacteria to measure the toxicity of water — important both in the water industry and in a wide range of industrial processes. Dr Martin claims that this is an \$8 billion market, although Azur's annual sales are currently less than \$5 million.

The development, of an online system that allows remote monitoring is forecast to produce a rapid increase in sales over the next few years, from \$7 million next year to \$35 million in the 2003 financial year. Azur plans to break even in 2001.

Yorkshire is already using Azur's Microtox-OS system, and the product is on trial with Northumbrian Water as well as with the East of Scotland water company.

Azur has also worked with Shell to develop a test to measure petroleum hydrocarbons in soil.

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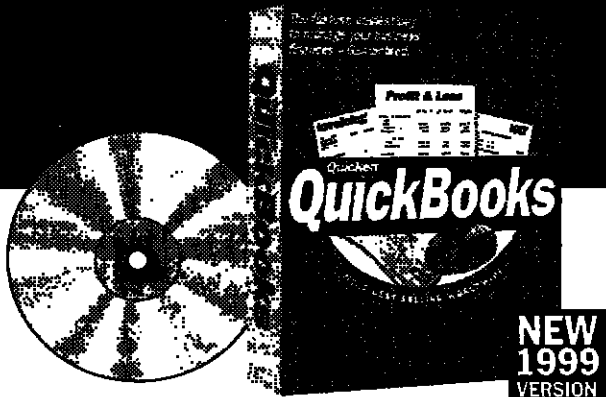
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BATIMES

Moving magic out into the real world

Paul Zenon approaches strangers in the street, in pubs, in car parks, in shops and plays bewitchingly slick tricks on them. In Paul Zenon *Turning Tricks* (Channel 4), we saw how he makes a woman's credit card vanish and then makes it reappear inside his own wallet. Signed playing cards materialise inside a take-away doner kebab. He seems to print new £10 notes, or to make them vanish and turn up miraculously inside an uncut lemon. He wears coins in half. He walks into a fetish shop and leaves after having linked a woman's nosering to a man's earring.

Zenon is part of a new movement to move the magician away from the artificiality of the stage and into the heart of everyday life. Ever alert to giving the public what it wants, this trend may be what inspired Tony Blair, George Robertson and Robin Cook to move their magic out of

the Cabinet room and into the real world: "You Sir. Yes, you Sir. Now watch closely. See this country? Take a close look and satisfy yourself that it is in fact Serbia. Now, it's being run by a vile, murderous dictator called Milosevic. We're going to sign his card. Will you please verify to the audience that we have done that? Right. Now, see those bombers? We're going to blitz Serbian military installations and five days later Milosevic puts his hands up and says 'You're more than a match for me'."

"And the beauty of this trick is that, because it is morally just and because it works so smoothly, we don't even have to think too hard in advance about what might happen if he doesn't give up, or if our actions swell the refugee crisis, or if we have to send in ground troops, or if we pledge to prosecute him for war crimes when this is over, thereby denying his incentive

to desist. Now watch closely as the magic begins."

Yup, that's what makes Zenon so impressive. His tricks work effortlessly. The downside of playing tricks on Milosevic is that he's one of those cynical spoilsports who sits in the audience and says, "Yeah, I've seen that manoeuvre before and I know how it's done, so you can't fool me." Let's now hope that Blair, Robertson and Cook don't end up making a name for themselves on the club circuit as the only magicians who perform tricks in such a way that it is the magicians who are left wondering how the punter tricked them.

The story of little men pitted against an unfathomable, murderous, untamable beast also raised its head in *Moby Dick* (BBC2), which used the oil-on-glass animation technique to haunting effect to condense Melville into just half an hour

REVIEW



Joe Joseph

without making you irritated by the stripping of the plot to its barest thread. The elaborate technique — by Moscow's Man and Time film studio — exquisitely captured the movement of the sea, of the *Pequod* and of the great white whale, while at the same time heightening the adventure's mythic qualities. It was produced by SAC, Channel Four Wales, which produced the

Oscar-nominated *Canterbury Tales*, and the series of animated Shakespeare plays.

Lenny Henry, meanwhile, is still trying to pull off the trick that keeps many talented comics awake at night: doing something more than just making people laugh. Rory Bremner is translating operas. Steve Martin now writes for *The New Yorker*, to show us that he has literary talent as well as comic accuracy and timing. Every so often Woody Allen will make a movie that is even less funny than a heart attack, just to show that he can.

In the BBC1 Henry gets to sing all his pet songs (as in James Brown numbers, rather than in *How Much Is That Doggy in the Window?*), just as he does in those for-orchestra ghazals which shows in West End theatres when all the other comics are doing comedy and he's belting out Rhythm and Blues. *The Man* does

have a plot: a Midlands estate agent, Dennis, hankering after a rock star's life, who eventually realises what's really important in life when his girlfriend and friends all leave him. But it's essentially a string of great songs strung, like gaudy beads, onto a twine necklace. At times it felt like we were watching BBC drama with Coca Cola and Levis commercials every four minutes as one classic tune followed another.

Lenny was clearly having the time of his life, but were we? Strangely, I was, mostly, in a mild sort of way. It takes quite an acting range to span bumptious go-getter to heartbroken loser in under two hours. Jack Lemon can do funny and serious, very often within the same minute. But it's a massive trick to pull off. However, what Henry lacks in acting expertise — compared, say, to Marianne Jean-Baptiste, who

shone in her role as Henry's girlfriend, Michelle — he makes up for in genial watchability. And hey, great songs!

More fab tunes in *The Bay City Rollers — Remember?* (BBC1), and actually, yes, it is hard to remember just how huge a success they were in their tartan-trimmed clown's outfits (they still are in Japan: look no further for evidence of the unfathomability of the Japanese).

This was a well-made documentary about the Scottish band and their bubblegum pop, and about how fame made them neither happy nor rich, and I'm glad I saw it. But I'm not quite as cheered by news that the band is reforming. So to the producers of *The Bay City Rollers — Remember?*, the answer is "Yes we do, but can we now forget again, please?" Because, as we all know, magic tricks are never quite so convincing the second time around.

BBC1

- 6.00am Business Breakfast (30148)
- 7.00 BBC Breakfast News (1) (76877)
- 9.00 Kilroy (1) (928185)
- 9.45 Style Challenge (8930356)
- 10.10 The Vanessa Show (1) (8987029)
- 10.55 News: Weather (1) (9284993)
- 11.00 Change That (9281032)
- 11.25 Can't Cook, Won't Cook (1) (9291419)
- 11.55 News: Weather (1) (7493362)
- 12.00 Going for a Song New series of the antiques quiz (5789634)
- 12.25pm Wipeout (6231934)
- 12.50 The Weather Show (1) (76181051)
- 1.00 One O'Clock News (1) (73964)
- 1.30 Regional News: Weather (5626896)
- 1.40 Neighbours Sarah faces an uncertain future (1) (16419633)
- 2.05 Inside (1) (1307051)
- 2.55 Through the Keyhole (1) (1) (2373506)
- 3.25 Children's BBC: Help! It's the Bear Bunch (8703490) 3.45 Arthur (2077728) 4.10 Anthony Ant (1544612) 4.20 Julia Jelby and Hattie Hattie (1544612) 4.35 Rugs (7702235) 5.00 Newsround (5730032)
- 5.10 **CHOICE** Trading Places: French Exchange Following a group of schoolchildren on an exchange visit to Champagne (5281631)
- 5.35 Rerun (1) (813141)
- 5.55 Neighbours (1) (1) (700186)
- 6.00 Six O'Clock News: Weather (1) (683)
- 6.30 Regional News Magazine (273)
- 7.00 Holiday Jill Dando visits the Italian resort of Capri, while Kate Sanderson soaks up the sun on the Caribbean island of St Kitts (1) (5070)
- 7.30 EastEnders Melanie has second thoughts (1) (457)
- 8.00 Animal Hospital (1) (1490)
- 8.30 Supernatural: The Unseen Powers of Animals How animals survive harsh environments (1) (6475)
- 9.00 Nine O'Clock News: Regional News: Weather (1) (8761)
- 9.30 Jailbirds Sue has an emotional reunion with her boyfriend (1) (85984)
- 10.00 The Vicar of Dibley Comedy, starring Dawn French (1) (71273)

BBC2

- 7.00am Children's BBC Breakfast Show: Polka Dot Shorts 7.10 The Silver Brumby 7.35 Top Cat 7.55 The Bots Master 8.20 Buried Treasure 8.40 Coober and the Ghost Chasers 9.05 The Midas Touch 9.35 Student Bodies 10.00 Teletubbies 10.30 FILM The Ugly Dachshund (94254) 12.00 Wildlife Showcase (78186) 12.30pm Working Lunch (96070) 1.00 Cake Dots (3645327)
- 1.10 The Leisure Hour (102877)
- 2.10 Sporting Greats (8917425)
- 2.40 News: Weather (1) (8585877)
- 2.45 On Cue with Steve Davis 1998 Benson and Hedges Masters Final (5331709)
- 3.25 News: Weather (1) (6071815)
- 3.30 The Village (1) (2700815)
- 3.55 Kaye Advice show (2785506)
- 4.25 Ready, Steady, Cook (1) (7393457)
- 4.55 Esther (1) (958167)
- 5.30 Whose House? (322)
- 6.00 The Fresh Prince of Bel-Air US comedy with Will Smith (1) (1) (846780)
- 6.25 Heartbreak High Lee's 18th birthday celebrations are ruined (1) (826631)
- 7.10 The O Zone Marine McCutcheon talks about life after Albert Square (1) (651032)
- 7.30 Counterblast Dr Charles Lane reveals the detrimental consequences of international wildlife conservation projects on people in Africa (2/6) (1) (159)
- 8.00 University Challenge Durham v Trinity College, Cambridge (1) (9032)
- 8.30 Your Money or Your Life Alvin Hall helps a 37-year-old Army major sort out her shaky finances (6/6) (1) (8167)

BBC2

- 9.00 Hancock's Half Hour Tony Hancock embarks on a marathon train journey to the wilds of Yorkshire (1) (1) (8631)
- 9.30 **CHOICE** Great Railway Journeys Stephen Tompkinson boards the Eastern and Oriental Express bound for Bangkok (1) (477506)
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- 10.20 Coming Clean: The Truth About Housework Last in series (1) (558341)
- 10.30 Newsnight (889612)
- 11.18 Video Nation Shorts (1) (94207)
- 11.20 Young Masters (545051)
- 11.20 The Phil Silvers Show Doberman reveals a hidden talent (1) (1) (819129)
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Zimbabwe
on brink of
financial ruin



BUSINESS EDITOR Patience Wheatcroft

TUESDAY APRIL 6 1999

New issues dry up in first quarter as investors shun smaller stocks

Flotations fall to ten-year low



Mackay: floated brewer

By PAUL ARMSTRONG

THE number of flotations on the London Stock Exchange has slumped to its lowest level for more than ten years, even though share prices have risen to an all-time high.

Just ten issues joined the stock market in the three months to the end of March, according to a survey by KPMG Corporate Finance. Six of these were investment trusts.

Yesterday KPMG gave warning that the situation was unlikely to improve this year. Neil Austin, head of new issues at KPMG, said the flight of investment capital away from

smaller stocks would probably cause the number of quoted companies going private to double from last year's number of 25.

He said this figure would be much higher if the mechanics of privatisation were not so difficult. But Mr Austin said fears were also growing among institutions that some managers were playing down their company's prospects to enable management buyouts to be made at a more favourable price.

He said a recent corporate governance survey by KPMG had revealed that fund managers were increasingly looking to non-executive directors as a

way to ensure that smaller companies' share prices were not deliberately restrained.

The ten flotations in the March quarter compares with 12 in the previous corresponding period and 73 for the same time in 1994.

Those companies that joined the quoted sector in the past three months include Yeoman 11 Investment Trust, which raised £38.8 million, Jupiter Enhanced Income Investment Trust (£47.7 million), Close Brothers Development (£4.3 million), Gander Properties (introduction), Acorn Income Fund (£12 million), The Enhanced Zero Trust (£60 mil-

lion), Synstar (£96 million), South African Breweries (£300 million) led by Graham Mackay, chief executive, Axon Group (£13.8 million) and Morse Holdings (£145 million). The figures exclude the April 1 listing of Canary Wharf, which raised £551 million.

Buyout proposals announced recently include Hall Engineering (£32.8 million), Goldsmiths (£43.9 million) and Rebus (£172 million).

The surging popularity of index tracker funds has seen fund managers abandon smaller and many medium-sized companies in favour of their bigger listed counter-

parts. The trend has exacerbated the problem of poor liquidity at the junior end of the market, where institutions fear they will be unable to sell a holding without severely depressing the share price.

It has also raised concerns about a shortage of development capital for emerging companies.

Mr Austin said a small part of the junior sector's plight could be blamed on a cyclical downturn, but most of it reflected a fundamental shift in investment priorities.

While institutions acknowledged that shares in some smaller companies were good

value, it took too much time and money to identify them.

He said the poor market for smaller flotations would eventually deter venture capital groups from funding some buyouts because this avenue for exiting the investment was narrowing.

However, the lack of interest in smaller stocks could also provide an opportunity for those venture capitalists with a longer-term view.

Mr Austin said they could retain their investment while the company grew to a point where it attracted fund managers, providing scope for a substantial return.

Markets hope for double rate cut boost

By ALASDAIR MURRAY
ECONOMICS
CORRESPONDENT

FINANCIAL markets hope for a double boost this week, with both the Bank of England and the European Central Bank (ECB) tipped to cut interest rates.

In Britain the business trends survey of the Engineering Employers' Federation is expected to show the engineering industry, comprising 5,000-plus companies employing 1.5 million, slipped deeper into recession in the first quarter.

The ECB has softened its rate stance recently, with senior members of the governing board apparently emphasising the risks of a slowdown in the European economy. The Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) and the ECB will announce their decisions on Thursday.

A majority of City economists expect the MPC to cut rates by a quarter point because of the continued strength of the pound and lower than expected fourth quarter GDP growth.

Survey evidence has suggested that the European economy is rapidly slowing, while inflation remains subdued. The resignation of Oskar Lafontaine, German Finance Minister, also removed a perceived political obstacle to rate cuts.

The ECB has come under pressure from international institutions in recent weeks to consider a rate cut. Last week the European Commission cut its euroland growth forecast from 2.6 per cent to 2.2 per cent, while the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development and the International Monetary Fund executive board indicated that they felt that the ECB has room to reduce rates.

US policymakers want Europe to adopt a more expansionary policy to ensure that the US does not have to take the whole strain of trying to stimulate global growth. However, some economists feel that, with the euro trading close to record lows, the ECB will leave rates at 3 per cent.

Dow surges above 10,000

FROM ANDREW BUTCHER IN NEW YORK

BETTING against an interest rate rise in the near future, US investors pushed the key Dow Jones Industrial average above 10,000 again yesterday.

The market surged from the opening after an employment report, released last Friday, showed the lowest jobless rate since 1970 combined with low wage rises. The report was viewed as harmless to interest rates and encouraging for corporate earnings.

Bruce Steinberg, chief economist at Merrill Lynch, said: "The US economy remains robust and the corporate earnings outlook is improving."

General Electric soared to a new high, while most of the other 29 companies that make up the Dow also rose. General

Electric's market capitalisation is the largest of any Dow company. Only Microsoft, which is listed on the Nasdaq market, is worth more.

The Nasdaq index, with a membership rich in technology companies, rocketed towards record level as investors bought Internet and computer stocks with renewed relish.

Yahoo!, the leading Internet search site, powered ahead more than 10 per cent to within a whisker of a record high as analysts revised the company's earnings estimates.

America Online, the world's most popular Internet service provider and one of the stock market's best performers in recent years, also continued its bull market run.



Don Clark, of Torquil Clark, the independent financial advisers, uses a helicopter to beat the deadline with his clients' last-minute Pep applications yesterday

MORE than 150,000 people have made inquiries to National Savings about the individual savings account (Isa), the new tax-free savings scheme that will go on sale for the first time today (Caroline Merrell writes).

The Isa will replace personal equity plans (Peps) and tax-exempt special savings accounts (Tessas). According to

Flying start expected for Isa

National Savings, the level of inquiries is much higher than expected. Peter Barreau, chief executive of National Savings, said: "Since we began advertising Isas on television and in the press, inquiries have been coming in at the

rate of over 2,000 per day. We are expecting a heavy demand."

According to research by MORI for Newton, the fund manager, about 15 per cent of adults in Britain think they will invest in the Isa in the

first half of this year. The 15 per cent equates to 6.75 million adults and compares with the 8 per cent who intended to invest in Peps during the same period last year.

In-house research by Newton revealed that one in five of

its customers actually intended to invest more in an Isa than they did in a Pep, suggesting that the Isa has been accepted by investors.

Overall, investors aim to save an average of £2,212 in Isas in the first six months. However, individuals nearing retirement have more to invest and say they will save £4,258 on average.

News Corp to unveil \$2.1bn Liberty deals

FROM ANDREW BUTCHER IN NEW YORK

THE News Corporation, the global media group, is today expected to announce two deals worth \$2.1 billion (£1.3 billion) with Liberty Media, the US sports broadcasting venture.

News Corp is set to acquire Liberty's 50 per cent interest in Fox/Liberty Networks, a joint venture with News Corp, for about \$1.4 billion in non-voting News Corp stock.

In addition, Liberty is expected to buy about \$700 million of News Corp shares from MCI WorldCom, the US long-distance phone company. MCI bought a stake in News Corp in 1995 as part of a business relationship. However, MCI's strategy has changed since its merger with WorldCom.

News Corporation owns

News International, the parent company of *The Times*.

Fox/Liberty Networks is a sports business that was formed in 1995 to challenge the ESPN network that had

dominated sports broadcasting in America. Liberty, now a subsidiary of AT&T, is chaired by John Malone.

When the two deals have been completed, Liberty will become the third-largest shareholder in News Corp with an interest of 7.5 per cent.

Rupert Murdoch, the chairman and chief executive, and other family members control about 30 per cent of the company's shares, while the Capital Group owns 8.5 per cent.

Several Wall Street analysts viewed Mr Malone's interest in investing in News Corp as a significant vote of confidence in the company.

The company's American Depository Receipts rose sharply during trading in New York yesterday.



Malone: chairman of Liberty

LVMH and Gucci bid showdown

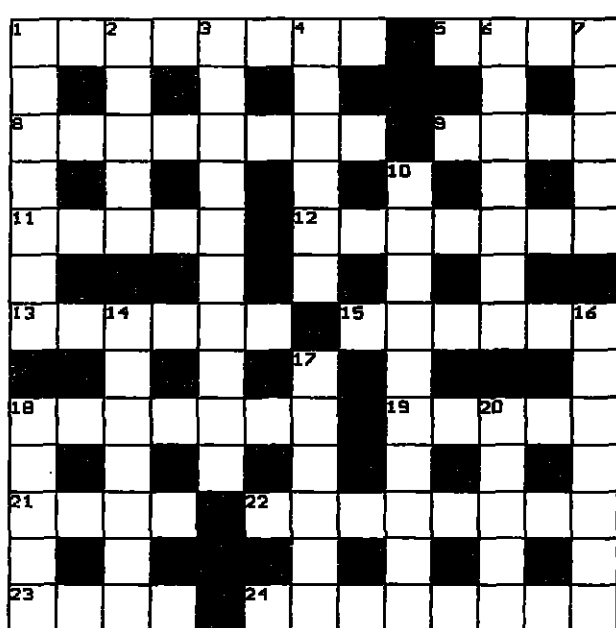
LVMH and Gucci will meet tomorrow as the two rival luxury goods companies seek a resolution to their £4.9 billion bid battle (Martin Barrow writes).

Bernard Arnault, the LVMH chairman, is expected to give full details of his offer. Gucci will then consider the bid in the following days, deciding whether or not to recommend it to shareholders.

LVMH had previously not intended to buy the whole company, merely to gain representation on the board. But Gucci forced its hand by sealing a deal with Pinault-Printemps-Redoute, the French retailer, for it to take a 40 per cent stake.

The battle started early this year when LVMH, which numbers Givenchy perfume and Moët & Chandon champagne among its products, built up a 35 per cent stake and asked for a seat in the boardroom.

TIMES TWO CROSSWORD



No 1684

ACROSS
1 Exhausted-soil disaster (4,4)
5 Church recess (4)
8 Perfumed (8)
9 Pine; extended (4)
11 Papal court (5)
12 Trafalgar anniversary month (7)
13 Repudiate (6)
15 Trouble: take trouble (6)
18 Big Greek jar (7)
19 Holy quest object (5)
21 Prosperous period; explosive noise (4)
22 Flirtatious behaviour (8)
23 Yugoslav dictator once (4)
24 Taken into custody (8)

DOWN
1 (Appearance) vandalised (7)
2 Set of steps (5)
3 It came to Dunsinane (Macbeth) (4,4)
4 Unprovoked; lascivious (6)
6 Lord High Everything Else (Mikado) (4-3)
7 - Allan Poe: Lear beggar (5)
10 In which are one's best cards (6,4)
14 Backing (7)
16 Passed on, along (7)
17 Multi-storied temple (6)
18 Bounds, scope (5)
20 Later than (5)

SOLUTION TO NO 1683

ACROSS: 1 Cocked 4 Outer 8 Let up 9 Unequal 10 Rue 11 Ochre 12 Shampoo 14 Thrash 16 Sonnet 20 Estella 23 Fiehe 24 Nil 25 Iranian 26 Igloo 27 Ditty 28 Beheld DOWN: 1 Call of the wild 2 Catcher 3 Empress 4 Opera 5 Trump 6 Rule of the road 7 Guest 13 Man 15 Ace 17 Off-line 18 Nacelle 19 Canny 21 Trait 22 Laity

SOLUTION TO EASTER SATURDAY TIMES TWO JUMBO

ACROSS: 1 Debate 5 Illustrator 11 Thrusts 15 Apartheid 16 Durrell 17 Bête noire 18 Respray 19 Necktie 20 Pain-killing 21 The wish is father to the thought 23 Catalonia 25 Turn the tide 27 Foyer 29 Contributor 31 Gambol 32 Hispanic 35 Pre-empt 37 Eternity 38 Hard-bitten 40 Swiss chard 41 Tribunal 42 Upgrade 44 Obelisks 45 Castle 46 Rationalise 49 Envoy 51 Thunderclap 53 Boot sales 55 Triumph of hope over experience 58 Sleeping car 60 Dunedin 61 Sterile 62 Advertise 63 Porcine 64 Daintiest 65 Earmark 66 Tastelessly 67 Soybean

DOWN: 1 Diacritic 2 Brassie 3 Caterpillar 4 Everything but the kitchen sink 5 Indonesia 6 Lady Chatterley 7 Stretcher 8 Roe deer 9 Telephone box 10 Rubbish bin 11 To take the wind out of one's sails 12 Renal 13 Smilingly 14 Sleight 22 Offspring 24 Tangerine 26 Timetable 28 Reconvene 29 Copstone 30 Theory 31 Generator 33 Nathaniel 34 Hamlet 36 Mysticism 39 Unpreparedness 43 Cardiographs 47 Absentmindedly 48 Sufficient 50 Voice-over 52 Levantine 53 Boxing Day 54 Steventon 55 Testate 56 Endorse 57 Naivete 59 Parma

Budget changes force up cost to employers

Medical cover fear for staff

By CAROLINE MERRELL

EMPLOYERS face a 22 per cent increase in the cost of providing private medical insurance because of changes introduced in the Budget, according to new research.

William M. Mercer, the employee benefit consultant, believes that the increased costs will prompt employers to withdraw or curtail private medical insurance offered to employees. Some four million employees are covered by company schemes.

The sharp increase in costs is blamed on rising premium costs and changes in national insurance. In last month's Budget Gordon Brown, the Chancellor, added a percentage point to insurance premium

tax (IPT), bringing it to 5 per cent, and changed the rules so that employers now have to pay NI on the benefit for employees. Steve Clements, of William M. Mercer, said: "In the first instance, employers' national insurance contributions and the rise in IPT will push up the costs by over 12 per cent."

Mr Clements also believes that the medical inflation, which far outstrips the prevailing inflation rate, will eventually add to the costs for employers.

William Laing, a partner of Laing and Buisson, the specialist healthcare analyst, said employers will be under pressure to pass on costs to employees. He said: "The majority [of employees], around 59 per

cent, do not have to pay anything towards their schemes; the rest do."

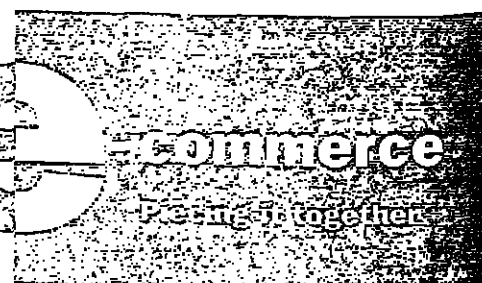
Mr Clements said employers would have difficulty in simply abandoning schemes as costs rise. "It is one of the most highly valued benefits and many employees make regular use of it," he said. "So it is not easy to say I'm withdrawing it, buy your own cover."

David Bryant, a spokesman for BUPA, the private healthcare firm that reported a fall in profits last week, said: "I do not disagree with the 22 per cent figure, but I say that it is speculative. We have not yet decided what we are going to do with our premiums, but we will be deciding this summer."

MORSE

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